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[PRICE ONE PENNY]



THE GIPSY PEER:

A SLAVE OF CIRCUMSTANCES.

CHAPTER XXX.

Nay give me thy hand!
Friendship so fairly offered
Could win a sweet return
From a crab apple.

Fletcher.

LONDON is a huge place and it grows huger every day, but in its northern part there still remain some quiet nooks and grassy corners which, though almost within sound of Bow bells, contain the germ of rural life and exist. Heaven knows how, in spite of the speculative builder and his ally, the iron horse.

In one of these quiet nooks stood a small batch of houses of long-ago date and of unpretentious character.

Small, cozy rooms, latticed windows, ivy-grown porches—there they were within an easy distance of the great city, nestling as strangely as the pigeons in the capitol of the Exchange.

In an upper room of one of these cottages, at the hour of midnight, sat a young man of fair proportions, with deep, brown, mournful eyes and a pale, somewhat wistful face.

The room was plainly furnished with a few unpretentious chairs, a table, and a not altogether inviting couch.

The four walls were garnished here and there by plain deal bookcases, well filled with standard works and books of reference.

On the table was a massive marble inkstand spotted with ink and dusty.

On the blotting-pad before the bent figure was a pile of paper, upon the uppermost sheet of which ran some closely, hurriedly written lines.

The student—or philosopher—he might be either from his garb and thoughtful attitude, rested his head upon the hand which still held the pen ready to register the thought immediately the brain produced it.

As the clock struck twelve the young man looked

[TO THE RESCUE.]

wearily up at the small, modest timepiece on the mantel, and with a sigh laid down his pen.

As he rose and turned his face to the light he revealed the features and form of Tazoni—or, as the world now called him, Frank Forest.

"Twelve o'clock," he said, taking a glass of water and a slice of bread from a table which stood near the window. "Time for a little rest. If one did not think while one rested how much more refreshing an hour's idling would be. I think, think, think every moment I am not working, and of the two I find the former the most exhausting. Work—what do I work for? Am I any nearer the purpose I set myself to attain? Where is Lurli—the sister left to my charge, the woman I had sworn to protect? Where is Lurli? Ah, to be able to answer that question happily I would barter my life! I have sought her in the dark courts and alleys and in the lighted saloons of this great and wicked Babylon. I have not rested night nor day—for I still seek her in my dreams—and am no nearer her than I was when I left my faithful friends with a vow registered in Heaven to find her. If I have failed in this purpose the tempter would have me believe that I have succeeded in another. Once I longed with all my soul to be free of the gipsy name and life, free to seek my fortune in the world as others did. I am free of the old life. I have sought my fortune and they tell me that I am likely to be famous. Nay, I am already sought after by the wealthy and the great, and the name I have stolen is heard on the byways to fame. Famous, perhaps rich! What then? What is fame—what is wealth to me if I leave my vow unaccomplished and Lurli's fate unavenged?"

"Ah! How too can wealth and fame serve me but to add to the shame which surrounds the infamous name of Tazoni the burglar and would-be assassin!"

"Oh, Heaven! If this is rest, to travel through the mazes of my life, 'twere better to work till all were chaos, and the grave swallowed up all regret and vain longing. Lurli, whether thou art in Heaven or earth, thou must hold me blameless, for I have sacrificed all that I hold dear—my honour and my hopeless love—to the task of rescuing

thee! My hopeless love! Is it so hopeless? Nay, what could be more so?"

"Though Frank Forest's name were trumpeted throughout the world by the herald Fame, Tazoni is still the gipsy outlaw and suspected felon, and the gulf between him and Florence Dartagle is impassable.

"Florence! Florence! I have tried to tear you from my heart, but my soul's eyes will not close upon your face till death closes upon them. Florence, I could die happy or live contented if Lurli were avenged and you could believe me innocent!"

With a sigh that was almost a groan he strode to his desk again and took up his pen.

But the reality of the past and present had overwhelmed the imagination and for him that night his work was over.

A pile of unopened letters were thrown together at his elbow.

Indifferently he took one up and—to prevent himself from recurring to his self-communing—he opened one and read it.

"Strange!" he murmured. "This comes from Sir Harry Beauchers, the one man of all the crowd whom I should like to know and make a friend of. Something in his face and his voice went to my heart. There was the true ring in his tone and the true heart in his smile. Sir Harry Beauchers, I should like to grasp your hand in friendship, but it must not be. Tazoni has not lost all honour yet, and he would think it the blackest baseness for him to call any man friend while the stigma of a felon hung over his head. Yet he writes cordially, pressingly—will I meet him and go with him to his gymnasium? He is fond of pistol-shooting, fencing, wrestling. So am I; but it must not be, Sir Harry Beauchers. No one shall have it in his power to call Frank Forest friend and disown Tazoni, the midnight thief. No, I will write at once, a cold, formal note, declining the invitation and his friendship. I have sufficient excuse. I work night and day. I see no one, make no friends. Not a soul knows that I live here, let me remain all-in-all to myself until Lurli is found and I am free to offer myself up as the suspected felon."

He drew the note-paper towards him and wrote a cold reply, folded it and directed it, but his guardian angel whispered him to pause, and after a few moments' thought he said to himself, hesitatingly:

"I will meet him this once and tell him, more courteously than this rude note does, that it is impossible for me to accept his friendship."

So he tore his written reply into fragments. And so it happened that Lord Raymond Hursley was confused by the familiar remembrance which he fancied he detected in the gentleman who passed on the other side of the road as his lordship entered his ash.

Frank Forest, still in doubt as to the wisdom of the step, was on his way to meet Sir Harry Beauchere.

The pistol-gallery was near Leicester Square. As he entered the long, narrow room a gentleman rose from an American smoking-chair and held out his hand with a rare smile.

For the life of him Tazoni could not resist the temptation to return the pressure of the hand and the welcoming smile.

"Mr. Forest," said Sir Harry, "I am afraid you will think me an extremely eccentric individual. It is not usual to ask a gentleman to commence a friendship in a shooting-gallery but I always follow the bent of my inclinations, and I fancied that you would prefer a little change to the ordinary and hackneyed 'small dinner,' so I thought we would inaugurate our friendship by a little pistol practice—a thing, by the way, which generally terminates a friendship."

The speech was so frank, so cordial, and withal so natural, that Tazoni's cold refusal struck in his throat.

"Sir Harry Beauchere," he said, "believe me that I am grateful, but it must not be. I cannot—much as I desire to—accept your friendship. Indeed, believe me, you are offering more than you suspect when you extend your hand to grasp mine. I cannot give you the reason for my determination to call no man friend; suffice it that I am wedded to a secret purpose, that my life is spent in following that, and in working for means to attain it, and that, great as I value it, I cannot take the friendship you so cordially offer me."

Sir Harry Beauchere looked long and earnestly. "Mr. Forest," he said, in a more earnest tone than his friends could have given credit for, "I want all you advise, and I still say 'be friends.' I am ready to have you with all reservations. Tell me what you like, keep from me all you like! I want to know nothing, and I shall never want to know anything concerning your affairs or purposes. Let us shake hands."

Tazoni could not resist and they grasped hands. "Do you shoot?" he asked, as quietly and easily as if the foregoing conversation had not occurred.

"A little," said Tazoni, modestly.

Sir Harry called for pistols, and taking one from the attendants fired at the target.

"Not a good shot by any means," he grumbled. "You can get nearer the bull's-eye than that, Mr. Forest!"

Tazoni took the pistol, aimed with seeming carelessness, and sent the bullet ringing through the centre of the bull's-eye.

Sir Harry smiled and raised his eyebrows. "You can shoot more than a little," he said. Tazoni smiled rather bitterly.

"I learnt in a hard school," he said, looking round wistfully at a rifle which stood against the wall.

Sir Harry reached it, and Tazoni, with a thrill of pleasure at the touch of the weapon, raised it to his shoulder.

There was a glass so arranged that it reflected the passers-by in the street outside, and at the same time reflected the side face of the marksman.

Sir Harry knew by the turn of the hand and the steadiness of the arm that Tazoni was familiar with the weapon and watched with interest.

Again the bullet cleared the mark.

Sir Harry rose and eyed his companion with quiet, composed admiration.

"Mr. Forest," he said, "if I had known you could shoot as well as write I should have hunted you up before this. Perhaps you do something in this line?"

And he took up a pair of foils.

"No, I cannot," said Tazoni.

"I'm almost glad to hear it," said Sir Harry, "as you would have exalted the Admirable Crichton. Will you have a turn with me?"

Tazoni took the foil, and, knowing nothing of fencing, was soon out-played.

They had several bouts, and all the while Sir Harry watched his companion closely.

He saw a flush of colour was mounting to his pale, thin face, and that a gleam of interest was lighting the deep, thoughtful eye, and he thought: "This is what he wants; he is too fine a fellow to become a musty bookworm, and he shall not if I can help it."

Meanwhile Tazoni was interested quite as much as Sir Harry suspected.

He was fond of field sports, and this trial of skill and strength made his heart beat as it used when he was tramping through the Earls Court woods.

"Come," said Sir Harry, "you would soon be as good a fencer as marksmen if you gave the foils a little of your attention. Do you know this feat? It's a matter of strength only."

And as he spoke he gave his sword the usual twist, and wrenched Tazoni's sword out of his hand.

Tazoni picked it up with a smile.

"Let me try that," he said.

And Sir Harry, to his utter surprise, found that he could not hold his foil against the novice.

"You must be very muscular," he said. "No other man has been able to do that before you."

"I am strong," said Tazoni, simply.

"Could you lift that Indian club four times round your head?" asked Sir Harry, who wished to keep him interested.

Tazoni caught it up and swung it six times instead of the four, and with evident ease.

"Splendid!" said Sir Harry.

Tazoni picked up two clubs, and had raised them above his head, when suddenly they fell with a tremendous crash upon the floor, and he stood as if petrified, staring at the mirror before which he had happened to place himself.

Sir Harry, thinking that he was ill, went up to him and sought his arm.

But Tazoni shook him off, and, white with eagerness or some other emotion, pointed to the glass.

Sir Harry Beauchere raised his eyes, and saw the reflection of two men standing together outside the gallery.

Before he could make a remark the men turned as Tazoni recovered from his motionless seat of shame, and, still in his shirt-sleeves, sprang to the door.

Sir Harry, who thought that his new friend's coming had taken leave of him, sprang after him, and caught his arm.

Tazoni turned upon him almost savagely; then, as if recalled to a sense of the time, place, and scene, he drew along with a snarl, and, in a voice trembling with eagerness, said:

"I beg your pardon. Did you see two men standing there? I saw them in the looking-glass inside."

"So did I. Did you know them?"

"One of them," said Tazoni, looking up and down the street.

"Which was it?" asked Sir Harry.

"Why do you ask?" retorted Tazoni, eyeing him.

"Did you know either of them?"

Sir Harry nodded.

"Yes; the younger one was Lord Raymond Hursley."

"Ah!" breathed Tazoni, "I thought so. Pardon me, but I must follow that man. It is a matter of life and death—not my own, or rest assured I should not be so anxious, but another's whom I hold both dear and sacred. Do not hold me, I must—"

"Pardon me," said Sir Harry, quietly yet gravely. "You say you must follow Lord Hursley on a matter of the greatest importance. Do not think me needlessly curious or interfering if I request you to wait a little while."

"Wait, why should I wait?" asked Tazoni, with ill-suppressed impatience, his dark eyes fixed on the end of the street down which Lord Raymond had disappeared.

"So that you may better attain your object. If you follow Lord Hursley now he will have you at a disadvantage."

"You know something of him?" said Tazoni, turning with surprise.

"Enough to know that he would have the advantage of you in your present excited state. Pardon me, Mr. Forest, but you are the first man I ever felt interested in, do not balk me in doing you a service if I can. I do know something of this Lord Hursley. I know where to find him, I think, if you want to lay your hands upon him."

Tazoni, who was now calm again, turned his pale face with earnest entreaty.

"I do want to lay my hands upon him when he is not aware of my nearness."

"You can do it, I know—but come, I will make a bargain with you. Come home with me and get some luncheon and I'll tell you all I know."

Tazoni made a silent gesture of assent, he was too excited to speak, and Sir Harry called his cabriolet.

The two jumped in, and were soon conveyed to Sir Harry's chambers.

Tazoni could hardly suppress his impatience while the servant laid an elegant luncheon, and immediately he had retired said, almost passionately:

"Forgive me, Sir Harry, but I am in torment. I can neither eat nor drink until you have satisfied my curiosity and anxiety. This is a matter of the greatest importance to me."

"Not a word until you drink some wine," said Sir

Harry, firmly. "You can't afford to waste your feelings away on nothing. You think you are strong, Mr. Forest, but I tell you your strength will soon vanish under the strain of mental excitement."

"I stop him Tazoni swallowed a glass of wine."

"Now, for Heaven's sake, go on!"

Quietly and calmly as usual Sir Harry told his story of the girl's appearance at the window of Lord Hursley's villa.

Tazoni sprang to his feet with a cry of mingled agony and joy.

"What!" said Sir Harry, very much disappointed. "I did not know you were concerned in that part of the story. But, hang it! I might have guessed there was a woman at the bottom of it!"

And in high dudgeon he lit a cigar.

Tazoni laid his hot hand on Sir Harry's arm and looked at him with fixed, earnest gaze.

"Disabuse your mind, Sir Harry; there is not a woman mixed up in it in the way you mean. You will not refuse to help me—you cannot!"

"Will you assure me that you are not in love with this girl at the window?" asked Sir Harry, with an eagerness on his part.

"I swear that I am not," said Tazoni.

"That you don't want to marry her?" asked Sir Harry, still quite unlike his usual self.

"Before Heaven I do not!" asserted Tazoni.

"Then I'll help you," said Sir Harry, quietly. "Candidly, if you told me that you were in love with her I would not have stirred another step, for I'd rather help a man to his happiness than his marriage. But I see you are all in a fever. I came to town, meeting Lord Hursley at the club and knocked him down."

Tazoni's eyes flashed and his hand closed spasmodically.

"My gratitude for that!" he said, in a suppressed voice.

"Thanks, but I did it on my own account. It is not generally known to whom the villa belongs, but my man is a talkative chatterbox and he will insist on bringing me a dish-up of gossip every time he can get the opportunity, so I am one of the very few that know it. And you tell me this girl is not insane?"

"Insane?" repeated Tazoni, in an agony. "No, unless that fiend in human form has made her so! She is a poor, innocent girl, as pure as the snow and as gentle as a child! Sir Harry Beauchere, two years ago you offered me your friendship. Give me your help to rescue this victim of a bad man's cruelty and I will bind myself to serve you—ay, at the gallies if it were possible—till death. In your hands her happiness, her very life rests! I demand them in the name of humanity!"

"You shall have them if I can give them to you," said Sir Harry, with a sparkle in his eyes. "What would you have me do?"

"Come with me to the police-office and make this statement—"

"And so give Lord Hursley time to make away with her?" interrupted Sir Harry, softly.

Tazoni strode up and down the room.

"If one pair of arms could tear her from his grasp and stretch him lifeless at the same moment these should do it!" he exclaimed, raising his arms above his head passionately.

"Two pair of hands and an equal amount of cool heads may be able to amuggle her, not only from Lord Raymond's arms, but his house," said Sir Harry, as coolly as before.

Tazoni stopped in front of him with anxiety and eagerness.

"You will join me?"

"I will. Now sit down and take some more wine. The attempt must be made to-night. We must do it ourselves and rely only on ourselves. Once rescue your friend—your friend, mind, not your sweetheart! I rely on your word—and we can soon punish our swartthy abductor. Without her we can do nothing—simply because we cannot prove that he ever held her. With her to help us to some evidence we may be able to rid England of that nobleman for a few years."

Tazoni sat listening, yet lost in thought.

"You said I was strong this afternoon," he said, suddenly and calmly. "I can swim three miles and scale a cliff. I would do that and more to rescue Lord Raymond's victim."

"You will have to climb a high wall and scale the side of a house," said Sir Harry, concisely.

"The window at which I saw her was at the back of the house. There are no bars at it or I should have noticed them. There are only women servants in the house—unless we should be fortunate enough to run against Lord Raymond himself—and a rope-ladder, which my talkative man can no doubt procure me, will settle the business."

Tazoni rose calm but eager.

"When do you propose to show me the house? Let me once know it and I will get her out."

"To-night. We must start at once. Are you ready?"

Tazoni smiled a strange smile for answer.

"I have been ready to meet him and rescue her since the night he stole her," he said.
 "So am I then," said Sir Harry, who was always impetuous in great things and wickedly indolent and procrastinating in small ones. "And so we'll start."

He slipped into the next room to get his overcoat and to order his cabriolet.

"Can you ride? I forgot to ask you," he said, stopping the man before he left the room.

"Yes," said Tazoni, with another smile.

And Sir Harry countermanded the first order and told the groom to saddle a pair of his best horses. Then he put on his coat and stood for a moment communing with himself.

"The girl's not mad after all; but I am. I must be, or why should I join with a stranger to burglariously enter another man's house and carry off what may turn out after all to be his own property? Sir Harry, my boy, you'll come to a bad end if you allow every fellow with a fine face and a musical tongue to lead you astray."

CHAPTER XXXI.

Heaven hath forestalled our wishes
 To Heaven then be the gratitude.

In a very few minutes the horses—assuredly two of the best, for Sir Harry's stables were far-famed—were brought to the door and Tazoni and his new friend were in the saddle.

For some time they galloped along in silence, Tazoni was in no mood for conversation, and Sir Harry thoroughly understood and sympathized with him.

They soon reached the Richmond road and urged their horses into a still swifter gallop.

At the sight of the river Tazoni's eyes flashed and a faint colour sprang to his face.

"Are we near?" he asked.

"It is not far," answered Sir Harry. "Don't you think we had better ride more quietly? The police will think we are a couple of highwaymen."

Tazoni pulled up his horse and they proceeded at a slower pace until they reached Sir Harry's villa.

Dismounting, he led the horse into the little courtyard and quietly rang the bell.

His servants were too accustomed to his unexpected arrivals to be alarmed, and his talkative man was soon eagerly hunting about for ropes and a dark lantern.

He was very anxious to follow his master, to whom he was much attached, but Sir Harry, taking the things, good-humouredly bade him go to bed, and rejoined Tazoni, who was impatiently waiting outside.

"Here are the ropes and a lantern, it has just struck me that we shall want a cloak; I'll run in and get one."

He ran back and saw Tazoni, looking impatiently round the dark lane, saw two figures, apparently of females, hastening through the gloom and keeping close to the hedge as if to avoid notice.

He was too much taken up with his own absorbing affairs to pay much regard to them, but his eyes rested for a moment on them and instinctively he turned his horse's head in their direction.

At the movement of the animal one of the figures uttered a smothered cry of alarm and taking the arm of her companion, who seemed much older, to judge from her gait and bent form, hurried her into a quicker pace.

Tazoni looked after them and wondered from whom and whither they were flying, but the next instant Sir Harry came through the gate, leapt into the saddle, and they were on their road again.

Proceeding more cautiously, they reached the side lane near Lord Raymond's villa, having made a slight detour in order to do so, and Sir Harry, raising his hand to impress silence upon Tazoni, pointed to the river.

"We must ride along the bank and gain the lawn," he whispered.

Tazoni followed him and he soon pointed out the window at which he had seen Lurli.

Tazoni's heart leapt in his bosom, and he dropped from his saddle all eagerness.

"Let us proceed cautiously," said Sir Harry. "My man has fastened two harness hooks on the ropes. I thought we could use them as grappling-irons perhaps. Here's the wall. Let me go first."

"No," said Tazoni. "I go first."

"Mind the bottles on the top of the wall," said Sir Harry.

But Tazoni had thrown the hook over the wall, drawn the rope tight, and, lighted by the lantern which Sir Harry held, he climbed up to the top.

There were small iron spikes inserted in the top of the wall, and as he made a dash with his hand one of them pierced the palm and caused him some pain, but he seemed insensible to it, and, merely casting the blood away, balanced himself on the narrow and painful platform while he disengaged the hook.

With the rope in his hands he was about to drop when Sir Harry called up to him in a whisper:

"Don't take the rope. How am I to get up?"

"I don't intend you to get up," said Tazoni, firmly. "Your neck and your name are of some consequence; mine are of none. Before Heaven you have proved yourself my friend in need, and I will not accept of any further sacrifice. There may be danger in this vile den. You shall not enter it if I can prevent it."

Sir Harry laughed musically.

"Leave the rope, or I will climb it by the aid of the horse. I am determined to stand by you, Mr. Forest."

Tazoni, seeing that he was determined, did not waste time or farther argument, but dropped the rope, telling him to beware of the spikes.

With this caution Sir Harry avoided the wound Tazoni had received, and, following his example, dropped into the lawn on the other side.

After waiting a moment to listen if their descent of the wall had awakened the inmates they proceeded stealthily and with the greatest caution up the garden and stood beneath Lurli's window.

Tazoni stopped back and gazed up at it as if his eyes alone could force an entry. Sir Harry turned the lantern upon it and flashed the light to and fro.

"If any one be awake that will rouse them," he said.

There was no sound, and he began uncoiling the ropes.

Tazoni meanwhile had been examining a creeping Irish ivy which ran up the wall some distance.

"No need for ropes," he said. "I can climb by the ivy."

"Nonsense," said Sir Harry. "You would break your neck."

Tazoni shook his head and buttoning his coat tightly round him commenced the ascent.

"Tie the rope round your waist," said Sir Harry, "for I mean to follow you."

Tazoni fastened the rope round his waist, and, with practised dexterity, reached the first window.

The ivy was not a thick one, and Sir Harry Beaudere saw with inexpressible horror that it had commenced to give way and that Tazoni was swinging to and fro.

"Drop, drop!" he called out, in a warning whisper. "It is your only chance! The ivy is giving way!"

Tazoni looked down and Sir Harry saw him smile. He had no thought of dropping or giving up the pursuit when so near his object. He held his life as of little weight as against Lurli's recovery; and, disregarding Sir Harry's caution, still climbed on, swinging to and fro in the light of the lantern and taking Sir Harry's breath away.

At last, just as the long, trailing piece of the plant came to the ground with a hushed rustle, Tazoni sprang noiselessly on to the window ledge and crouched, giddy and breathless, to brush the dust of the falling ivy from his eyes and face.

"Thank Heaven!" growled Sir Harry, with a shrug of the shoulders. "I never saw such a reckless fellow. Truly he does seem to hold his neck at a small value. Now for the rope," he added; and Tazoni, not daring to refuse him, dropped the rope and made the hook fast on the sill.

The window ledge was a broad one, made for holding a ledge of flowers, which had been removed to the greenhouse, and there was just room and no more for Tazoni to stand in front of one shutter while he forced open the other.

In effecting this he twice or thrice nearly lost his balance and brought the blood to the face of the watcher below, but his anxiety and excitement carried him through every danger, and at last both shutters were opened. He stood on the ledge in comparative safety and beckoned to Sir Harry that he might ascend.

In silence they passed to listen. Not a sound could be heard save the tossing of the horses' heads and the screech of an owl as it flew across the river.

Tazoni tried the window. As might have been expected, it was fastened.

Sir Harry looked at Tazoni in almost comical dismay.

Suddenly, however, Tazoni's face cleared, and motioning to a diamond ring which sparkled in the light of the lantern he held the light so that it shone upon the window bolt.

Sir Harry tried his hand at glazing, and jocularly passed the ring to Tazoni, who, with the quickness which had so long helped to earn his bread, neatly cut a small semicircle from the glass, and inserting his finger, thrust back the fastening.

Another moment and the window was open.

Yet another and the two were standing in the room.

Cautiously turning on the light, they looked at the luxurious furniture, round upon the expensively decorated walls, and at last Tazoni sprang at a small shawl which had evidently fallen from the wearer on to the back of the chair.

"Is it something of hers?" asked Sir Harry, with great interest.

Tazoni flung it from him and shook his head.
 "No. Let us make an entry into the next room," he said, and shutting the lantern until the light was reduced to a small stream, he crept quietly from the room to the corridor.

"This is her room, no doubt," said Sir Harry. "But you cannot open the door without awaking her."

Tazoni was about to reply when he uttered a "Hush" of warning, and pointed to the door, which was already ajar.

"Go in and wake her," said Sir Harry, with instinctive delicacy. "I will wait in the other room."

Tazoni, breathless with excitement, nodded, and pushing the door open entered the room.

Stealing cautiously to the bed, he whispered, "Lurli!"

There was no answer.

He called her again, this time in a louder voice, "Lurli!"

Again there was no reply, and, knowing the value of every moment, he determined to rouse her.

He walked to the bed, drew the curtains, and started with amazement to find the bed empty!

The clothes were disturbed; the bed had been occupied. There were clothes round the room, as if they had been lately worn.

A lamp, which had no doubt been lit when the occupant of the room had retired to rest, was still burning behind an ornamental screen.

As his bewildered senses took in all these details, his eye caught a familiar object.

From the half-open wardrobe hung Lurli's old crimson shawl!

All doubt was now dispelled. Lurli had been there, in that very room, perhaps only a few hours ago.

Where was she now?

Another door opened out of the room, it, like the one by which he had entered, was ajar.

He pushed it open, and was betrayed into a cry of astonishment. The room was in confusion. A table and a chair stood beneath the only window in it, and the window was wide open.

To spring upon the chair and look below into the front garden was the work of a moment.

Then it all flashed upon him. Lurli had escaped, had been rescued the very night he had discovered her prison. With a thankful yet bewildered heart he quickly retraced his steps and presented himself to his astonished companion.

"Well," said Sir Harry, impatiently, "where is she?"

"Heaven knows," replied Tazoni. "She has gone."

"Gone," repeated Sir Harry, who seemed somewhat disappointed, and changed colour more than his indifference to the fair sex should have allowed him. "What do you mean?"

"She has escaped," said Tazoni. "The room adjoining her bed-chamber is in confusion, a rope-ladder is at the window and the rooms are empty!"

"It is most extraordinary," said Sir Harry.

"Have you any idea of whom she has obtained help? She could not manage it herself, I suppose."

"I cannot imagine. Lurli was steady of heart and had true courage. She may have done it herself. Any way she has escaped, and I am Heaven's debtor. But I must find her; she may be passing to greater danger, for all I know, and I must keep my vow. Poor Lurli! poor Lurli!"

"Lurli; it's a pretty name," said Sir Harry, thoughtfully.

"I beseech you to forget it," said Tazoni, eagerly.

"It slipped from me unawares. There is danger to her and to me in that name, Sir Harry."

"Then I will never speak it," said Sir Harry, cordially.

While they had been talking they had been standing in the centre of the room lost to the danger and strangeness of their position. A slight noise below, however, recalled them to it.

"Hush!" said Tazoni, "they have heard us."

"So they have," said Sir Harry, as a woman's scream rang through the house. "I propose we stand and see the play out now the young lady has been rescued."

"No, no," said Tazoni. "How can I tell that she is safe? Go, Sir Harry, and gain the horses."

"And leave you here? Not I," retorted Sir Harry.

"Quick, quick!" cried Tazoni, as footsteps were heard coming up the stairs. "Not a moment is to be lost. Think of the scandal if this gets abroad. Nay, if you will not save your name I must do it perforce," and pushing Sir Harry to the window he forced him on to the ledge.

Sir Harry, laughing, caught the rope and swung himself down.

Tazoni unhooked the rope but on second thought let it remain, and catching at the ivy lowered himself down.

At one part the ivy was thicker than at others, and he paused for a moment to hear if the servants

would discover the rope at his window or at Lurli's. For a moment he heard voices above him talking in hurried, horrified tones and mingling together in indiscriminate ejaculations of alarm.

"She's gone, that's clear," said one louder than the others. "And what will his lordship say when he comes? I shall run away—that's what I shall do—for I dare not face him when he's in one of his mad rages! Who can have done it for her? Some one must, because she couldn't do it by herself. Oh, dear! oh, dear! I'm dead with fright!"

Then followed a scream.

"Oh, mercy! There's blood all over the room; on the window sill, too!"

"There's blood on the bed curtains!" shrieked another voice. "There's murder somewhere! Oh, dear! we shall all be killed! Look here, here's blood everywhere," and the speaker uttered another shriek.

In a few minutes they had gained their horses, and riding noiselessly along the river's bank reached the open country before a word was spoken.

(To be continued.)

A LOCK OF HAIR.

ALMOST every one has at least one lock of hair shorn from the head of one now dwelling in this silent land whence come no messages, no letters, no tokens of any kind to tell of love or of remembrance.

Everyone knows that strange emotion, half joy, half woe, with which the tiny relic of so much that was once dear can thrill the soul. Only now and then do we dare take it from its hiding-place, hold it in the palm, press it to the cheek, and use it as a talisman to recall all that we must perforce forget in the work-a-day world for the sake of strength to do its battle.

I do not know whose hair that which you treasure may be—whether the flossy curl from a baby's head, the dark lock from the brow that once made your breast its pillow, a parent's gray tress, or a young lover's sunny curl. Nor does it matter, for all love in its essence, in that part of it that outlives death, is alike and equally pure; but I know that there is nothing like it to you anywhere. There are no words for the thought it brings. They mock language. As you touch it and gaze at it you have nothing to say. You feel the thorns of your dead rose, that is all, and the wounds they make bleed.

There are old superstitions about locks of hair. It is not well for lovers to exchange them, it is said; and sorcerers always required a lock of hair before working spells for and against man or woman. In Sweden and Norway one who lets a bird get a hair of his head for her nest, dies before the young birds fly, unless old gossips are mistaken. Even about the hair of the living lies some romance; but the hair of the dead is a poem that all hearts comprehend. So a thief, who had stolen a lady's jewel-casket, once sent back, at some risk to himself, a little golden tress folded away amidst the diamonds—more precious than they—to the childless mother, with this brief note: "Which I 'adn't the 'art to keep hit."

But it is only when it is cut off that there is any romance about hair, unless it is beautiful. On ugly tresses no one has any mercy. "Tow head" and "carrot top," "wiry" and "scrubby," "docked" or "cropped," or "woolly," are some of the names that fall to its share at times, and it is only the exceptional few whose hair is tenderly thought of while it yet grows on their living heads. Yet, coarse or thin, or red, or faded though it be, some day the commonest tath that ever covered skull will be so much—so very much to one who has loved and outlived the being on whose head it grew. Such a strange, awesome thing to kiss and shed fond tears over, and put away carefully amongst most precious relics.

M. K. D.

INTERESTING DISCOVERY AT WHITCHURCH.—According to a report the bones of John Talbot, first Earl of Shrewsbury, have been discovered in the parish church of that town, where an urn, said to contain the embalmed heart of the great soldier was already known to exist. A few days ago, while some workmen were repairing the monument bearing the recumbent figure of Talbot, in the south aisle, the remains of a coffin were discovered, with a number of bones. The rector and churchwardens were informed of the discovery and carefully removed the bones, which were wrapped in cerements, in a wonderful state of preservation, and they found that only a few of the vertebral bones were missing. At the back of the skull was an opening, evidently made, it is said, by a battle-axe while Talbot was in a recumbent position and the probable cause of death. The Antiquarian Society, with whom the rector communicated, desired him to take casts of the

skull and other parts of the skeleton; and information of the discovery was also sent to the present Earl of Shrewsbury and other persons interest in it. A coffin has been prepared, and it is expected there will be public interment of the remains in the porch, where the heart is believed to lie.

BOYS, HEED THIS.—Many people seem to forget that character grows; that it is not something to put on ready-made with womanhood or manhood, but day by day, here a little and there a little, grows with the growth and strengthens with the strength, until good or bad, it becomes a coat of mail. Look at a man of business, prompt, reliable, conscientious, yet clear-headed and energetic. When do you suppose he developed all these qualities? When he was a boy. Let us see the way in which a boy of ten years gets up in the morning, works, plays, studies, and we will tell you just what kind of a man he will make. The boy who is late at meals and late at school stands a poor chance of being a prompt man. The boy who neglects his duties, be they ever so small, and then excuses himself by saying "I forgot! I didn't think!" will never be a reliable man. And the boy who finds pleasure in the suffering of weaker things will never be a noble, generous, kindly man—a gentleman.

SABBATH IN THE COUNTRY.

A SABBATH stillness fills the air,
Silence enthroned in quiet queen,
And aways her sceptre o'er the scene,
Dispeopled is the village green,
No traffic stirs the silent square.
The shuttle rests upon the loom,
No grist comes to the dusty mill,
The factory wheels are locked and still,
The unharassed ox wanders at will,
Over the grass and clover bloom.

Quenched are the furnace fires to-day,
No hammers make the anvil ring,
No brawny arms high axes swing,
The sky seems like a sheltering wing,
Touching the hills not far away.

The day is calm, the air is soft,
Yet there are whisperings of trees;
And the soft hum of honey-bees;
The praise of humble things like these
Should teach us all to look aloft.

Fashion has taken early flight;
It leaves the quiet nooks and shades,
The wooded hills and sylvan glades
For museums and masquerades,
And pleasures that invade the night.

There floats a golden butterfly,
The other butterflies have fled;
For maple leaves are turning red;
And twittering swallows overhead
Predict a cool and sombre sky,
They heed the faded leaf that falls.
Within the modest church to-day,
We miss the dresses rich and gay,
For the bright birds have flown away
For town life, palaces and halls.

G. W. B.

HEIGHT OF THE HUMAN SPECIES.—M. Silberman shows the average height of the male and female population of France, taken in a certain position which he names the "geometry," is 1.600040 metres, or 2 metres if in the same position the hands are comfortably extended over the head. Two individuals laid lengthwise, with fingers touching, would thus measure 4 metres, and this he terms the base of the harmonic proportions of the human race. Thus the harmonic base is four times 1 metre, just as the meridian is four times 10,000,000 metres, and the relation of the two integers is 1 to 10,000,000. From these considerations he draws proofs of the equality of the sexes, as they exhibit woman not as a complement to the male portion of the race, but as constituting normally and by right half of the human family. M. Silberman arrives at the conclusion, as the result of his various investigations and studies, that the average height of the human race has remained unchanged since the Chaldean epoch 4,000 years ago.

THE MAMMOTH CAVE OF MEXICO.—It is said that the Cave of Cacahuamilpa is the largest cave which is yet known in the world. Several persons, who have visited the mammoth cave of Kentucky and that of Cacahuamilpa in Mexico, pronounce the latter the larger. A volcanic mountain with an extinct crater covers this cave. It is not described in guide books or books of travel. It has, in fact, never been adequately described. Mr. Porter C. Bliss has twice examined and explored it, the last time in February of the present year. Six hundred persons constituted the exploring party; they were provided with Bengal lights and scientific appliances. After reaching a level at perhaps fifty feet depth,

they proceeded $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles into the interior. The roof was so high—a succession of halls—that rockets often exploded before striking it. Labyrinthine passages leave the main hall in every direction. Stalagmites and stalactites are abundant. Below this cave at a great depth, are two other immense caves.

HAPPY HUSBANDS.

It is a man's own fault if he is unhappy with his wife, in nine cases out of ten. It is a very exceptional woman who will not be all she can be to an attentive husband, and a more exceptional one who will not be very disagreeable if she finds herself wilfully neglected. It would be very easy to hate a man, who, having bound a woman to him, made no effort to make her happy; hard not to love one who was constant and tender, and when a woman loves she always strives to please.

The great men of this world have often been wretched in their domestic relations, while mean and common men have been exceedingly happy. The reason is very plain. Absorbed in themselves, those who desired the world's applause were careless of the little world at home; while those who had none of this egotism strove to keep the hearts that were their own, and were happy in their tenderness.

No woman will love a man the better for being renowned or prominent. Though he be first among men she will only be prouder, not fonder; and if she loses him through this renown, as is often the case, she will not even be proud. But give her love, appreciation, kindness, and there is no sacrifice she would not make for his content and comfort. The man who loves her well is her hero and her king. No less a hero to her though he is not one to any other; no less a king though his only kingdom is her heart and home.

M. K. D.

HOME.

He who examines human life with attentive eyes will find that it is chiefly made up of trifling incidents and petty occurrences; that our greatest afflictions arise from bereavements or disappointments which properly considered should not occasion a sigh. The distresses of mind of most common occurrence are but insect stings, which smart for a moment and are over; and the vast majority of earthly pleasures are experienced in the pursuit of some unreal good, alluring at a distance, but despised as soon as won. The bubble that charmed by its beautiful rotundity and crystal brightness turns to water in the grasp; and the prospect that from afar seemed green with verdure and rich with fruitage, on near approach is found to be chequered with the same diversity which characterized the scenes that previously passed.

The only fountain in the wilderness of life where man may drink of waters totally unmixed with bitterness is that which gushes forth in the calm and shady recesses of domestic love. Pleasure may heat the heart into artificial excitement; ambition may delude it with its golden dream; war may indurate its fibres and diminish its sensitiveness; but it is only domestic love that can render it happy.

It has been justly remarked by an ancient writer, that of the actions that claim our attention the most splendid are not always the greatest; and there are few human beings who are not aware that those outward circumstances of pomp and affluence which are looked on with admiration and envy seldom create happiness in the bosoms of their possessors. It is in the unrestricted intercourse of the domestic circle, where heart is linked with heart, that real enjoyment must be experienced if it be experienced at all; not in threading the complicated labyrinth of politics, nor amidst the glare of fashion, nor surrounded by the toils of state.

Like the poor player when his hour of mimic greatness is passed, even the rulers of the earth eagerly strip themselves whenever an interval of ease is afforded of the artificial ornaments and disguises that in public they are forced to wear, but which are shown to be encumbrances by the alacrity they evince in dispensing with them. From the privacy of home they issued into public life; the privacy of home they revisit whenever occasion permits; and not even the "round and top of power" can totally allure their mental vision from the contemplation of its soul-satisfying joys.

A BIG FISH.—There is being exhibited in Halifax, N.S., a mackerel caught off the harbour of that place which measures nine feet and weighs over five hundred pounds. Large as this mackerel is, yet it is not as large as one caught about four years ago by a fisherman in Newport, R.I., which he had on exhibition in front of the "Ocean hotel" at 10 cents a sight and which Colonel Bruce saw weighed. It weighed seven hundred and sixty-three pounds, and upset the boat in its endeavour to escape capture. What size would the butter-boat be that would accompany it to the table?



TREVELIAN; OR, ENTOMBED ALIVE.

CHAPTER VII.

Still from the fount of Joy's delicious springs
Some bitter o'er the flowers its bubbling venom
flings. Byron.

A BEAUTIFUL cottage, surrounded by a pleasure garden rich in fruit and flowers lay on the shore of the bay of Naples.

The cottage belonged to the Count Ramouski; and his wife and children, two lovely little girls of seven and eight years, were seated in the cool shade of a garden room, the windows of which were formed like glass doors and opened on a balcony raised a step or two above the closely-shaven lawn, which looked like a carpet of green velvet, interspersed with small flower-pots, glowing in scarlet, purple and orange below the morning sun.

The garden-room in which the countess sat, while her little girls played with their dolls, was furnished in pink and green brocade, over which, on the chairs and sofas, were drawn covers of thin, puffed muslin, making the whole look as if a profusion of crushed roses formed the seats.

The walls were literally covered by pictures of great beauty, and mirrors which reached from floor to ceiling.

There was no carpet, but its place was beautifully supplied by a flooring of polished black oak, richly ornamented by elaborate patterns of arabesque in straw-coloured satin wood.

The room was one where neither expense nor art had been spared to make it of perfect beauty; roses and richly tinted lilies, with their great, waxlike crimson and pink flowers, growing on the balcony, leaned in through the open windows, lavish of their perfume.

The broad expanse of the beautiful bay of Naples lay in placid calm below the windows, from which one could see "the ships go out and the ships come in," bearing the flags of all nations.

The beautiful Countess Ramouski sat looking up into her lord's face, her dark hair and eyes setting off the brilliant colour of her lips and cheek, as they contrasted well with the simplicity of her morning dress of white muslin.

"I am going from home to-day, Eugenie," said the count. "I have just received a letter from the Russian ambassador; he wishes me to go with him, his secretary is ill, and he is at a loss for a linguist. So it is possible I may not return until to-morrow."

[RESTORED BY THE WAVES.]

"We shall find the time long until you return," was his wife's reply. "Since we have been here your presence seems to be as necessary to the children as to myself. You will be back to dinner to-morrow?"

"At present I see nothing which could prevent me."

As he finished speaking he kissed his children, bidding them good-bye, and, taking his wife's right hand in his own left, he led her out to the balcony, where, unconscious of being seen, he encircled her with his arm, kissing her fondly.

A moment more and he was out on the lawn, stooping down to pick a handful of large red roses, which he flung on the balcony at his wife's feet and, crossing the lawn with long strides, he mounted his horse, which a servant held at the gate.

Eugenie Ramouski did not see the red roses, nor the beloved one who, having thrown them as a gage d'amour, was waving to her a parting hand as he took his horse's bridle from the servant.

She stood looking, with staring eyes and ashen-pale cheek, at a large man, dressed in sailor's clothes, who, with slow, lounging step, was passing the iron fence of the lawn, and whose brown, weatherbeaten yet handsome face was turned to hers, his large black eyes speaking to her own more eloquently than words ever spoke.

As he lounged so leisurely by the garden rail he never for a second relaxed his gaze. "He held her with his eye," and with the swiftness of lightning it brought before her mental gaze all the thrilling joy, all the intense misery of the past. All the bright, warm sunshine, ay, and all the deep, dark shadows of the old life were wrapped around her like a funeral pall.

She stood looking at the man with parted lips and a heart that almost stayed its beating.

He stopped opposite the balcony, leaned his arms on the top of the railing, and smiled!—the smile telling plainly of surprise, pleasure, recognition, lighting up the brown face, and striking dismay unutterable into the heart of the trembling woman to whom the smile was addressed.

She closed her eyes for relief from that scathing sight as she leaned for support against one of the pillars of the balcony.

"Good Heavens! Can it be possible?" she mentally asked herself. "Does the sea give up its dead? It is most surely he. And what am I? Oh, that there was some deep grave made for me, where I could lie down as dead and cold as stone."

Out at the gate her husband saw her ashen face, the nervous way in which she clung to the pillar for

support, and leaping from his horse he was by her side in a moment.

"Eugenie, my love, what ails you?" he asked, in an anxious voice, as he put his arm around her and disengaged her arms from encircling the pillar.

Her reeling heart was sick and trembled with fear, while the presence of her husband, his touch, his words, only increased sevenfold.

She opened her eyes, and involuntarily they sought the face of the man who still leaned on the garden rail.

He lifted his sailor hat as if to cool his head. He held it up for a moment, and a profusion of almost black, half-curling hair fell on his forehead.

The sight of the handsome, weatherbeaten face, with its wealth of dark hair, was more than she could bear, and sick with a certainty of the doom which was hanging over her, she sank almost fainting into her husband's arms.

Count Ramouski saw his wife's eye as it sought the face of the man whom he now observed for the first time leaning on the garden rail, and, at once attributing her agitation to fear of the stranger, he called out:

"What do you want, fellow? Move on."

At the same time he motioned to the servant who held his horse to see that the stranger did as he was bid.

The servant walked the horse to where the man stood, spoke to him, was replied to, and spoke again.

The man turned round, and, sauntering in the same leisurely manner as he had approached the cottage, took the way leading to the beach.

Had Count Ramouski seen the look of horror on the face of the servant—an old and faithful domestic, who had followed Eugenie from her Irish home—as he saw and spoke to the sailor, it would have given him food for thought until he reached the ambassador's palace—perhaps excited a jealousy which only lay latent in his bosom because there had never been the shadow of a cause to excite it.

The count led his wife into the garden-room, and, placing her on a sofa, said, with a smile:

"How silly of you, Eugenie, to be frightened by that man. He is evidently a British sailor, and most likely stopped attracted by the flowers of his own country you have so profusely decked the lawn with. He is a decent-looking man, and certainly for his time of life has a handsome enough face to win him welcome from a countrywoman, instead of causing fear. I must go now, Eugenie," he continued, looking at his watch. "It will take hard riding for me to reach the palace in time, and you know the ambassador is a martinet."

He stooped over her and kissed her cheek as he spoke. Both cheek and lip were nearly as white as marble. She half-turned away her face, but lifting his hand to her lips she covered it with kisses, as she did so saying to herself:

"Perhaps it is the last time I shall touch this hand, which is dearer to me than life."

The count gone, his wife listened until the last sound of the horse's hoofs had rung on the hard road, and then rising from the sofa she tottered to the window, looking out on the garden with wild eyes, dreading yet desiring to see again the face which she feared had come to turn the glad stream of her life into the waters of Marsh.

He was there again, near the garden gate than before. She knew he was looking for her, that he saw her face as it peered out between the lace curtains of the glass door.

He lifted his hat with a pleasant smile, as if he knew he was recognized and welcome, and then he opened the gate and sauntered up the drive.

Eugenie crept with slow, unsteady step back to the seat where she had just quitted, a dark mist swimming before her eyes. She looked down on the arms of the sofa, and laid her face in the pillows.

Her heart seemed as if it had within her bosom, her spirit powerless either to think or feel. Her flesh turned cold and rigid, as if a terror from the unseen world was upon her.

"Madam,"

The well-known voice of Lovell, the old domestic before her. His voice was low and subdued, as if he knew he was the bearer of evil tidings.

Eugenie turned her head on the pillow so as to look in the man's face, which was pale and troubled as her own.

"Madam," he repeated, "there is a man in the hall who desires to see you."

"Who is he, Lovell?"

The man did not answer for a second or two. The question was repeated, and then urged he stammered out:

"He says his name is Neville. He looks like a brother of one who we know was dead long ago."

"Lovell, he had no brother."

She spoke the words as if she were sealing her own doom, and then she added, in a firmer voice, as if nerving herself to meet her fate:

"Take the children from the room. And, Lovell," she added, "send him here, and wait outside the door, close to it, while he is here."

Eugenie raised her head from the pillows, and sitting with her cold hands clasped together awaited the man's entrance as a culprit may be supposed to await the fiat of the judge who he knows is to doom him to an ignominious death.

As the sailor entered and came towards her her frame shook as if under the influence of an ague fit. He came up to where she sat, smiling with a pleased look. Putting his large, brown hand on her shoulder, he said:

"Eugenie."

His voice trembled just a little, as if the word had brought with it a conviction that perhaps he might not be welcome.

He spoke her name with an effort, like one he was unaccustomed to, putting the accent on the wrong letter.

She drew back from the touch of his hand with a haughty, indignant air.

The voice reassured her. It did not sound in her ears like the one she expected to hear. The very thought was like life from the grave. She tried to still the beating of her heart and speak composedly as she asked:

"Who is it that addresses the Countess Ramonski so unceremoniously?"

The man did not answer her, but tried to take her hand, which she promptly resisted his doing. Her old spirit and determination were coming back to her. Should it prove to be as she feared, should the worst come to the worst, and she had to leave husband and children, her happy home, it must be done—she would go, but she would go alone.

This large, brown man was not the boy with the fair face she had loved so fondly, of whom she had dreamed for eight long years, all the time thinking he lay beneath the billows of the deep sea.

She summoned all her courage to her aid, and in a voice, the clearness of which astonished herself, she said:

"Who are you?"

"I am your husband, Harry Neville," was the reply.

It was the answer she expected, what she had been waiting for him to say since the moment he entered the garden-room. She had mentally repeated the words over and over. Yet now that they were said they made her blood run cold, her heart stop beating.

She had, almost unknown to herself, all the time been hoping against her own conviction, that the

strong-built, sun-burnt man before her, so terribly like yet so unlike the lithe, tall boy with his fair skin and girl-like complexion whom she had loved so wildly more than twenty years ago, would say:

"I am Harry Neville's cousin, or his uncle."

But now the words she had repeated to herself so often within the last half-hour were said—in a hearty tone by that coarse, common-looking man, with his large, handsome face and beautiful Neville eyes—she could not answer the man, could not even think. For some moments there was a blank. She was only conscious that some terrible misfortune had fallen upon her, blotting out her name, her very existence from her present life.

She was recalled to herself by the sailor taking her hand in his, saying:

"Poor Harry's ring is still on your finger. I tell you before he put it on that it would never come off."

She drew her hand slowly away from his. If she had needed confirmation of his being the one he said she was she had it now. He had repeated words spoken more than twenty years before, with no one present but herself and child.

"Where is Harry?" she asked, in a choking voice.

As she asked the question the thought that her own words suggested came as a blow of sweet comfort to her. The cup of life was now doled to drink.

She would have herself nothing to the one she had loved and thought of all those long past years, as the living shadow of all that had been.

She had never been able to love these golden-haired, blue-eyed Russian girls as she had loved that dark-eyed boy, and now that she would have him once more she would not be his mistress.

She had plenty of time for thought. The man answered not, only said looking on her:

Her own eyes were fixed on the capricious ring as it sparkled and shone on the hand she had withdrawn from the sailor almost at the same moment he touched it.

She raised her eyes to his face, and repeated her question with an impatient gesture:

"Where is little Harry?"

The answer came at last.

"Poor little Harry was drowned in the 'Royal Albert.'"

It seemed as if each sentence the man spoke was destined to cast her deeper into the sea of despair, where his face had plunged her the first moment she looked upon it.

Poor Eugenie! The bright sailor boy changed into a large, coarse, heavy man, whose very clothes spoke of low, common proclivities. Her baby boy who, for a few brief moments, she believed restored to her, buried again in the deep sea. Her handsome Russian husband, whom she loved with a love "passing the love of women," torn rudely from her heart, her fair girls following their grand, titled father. What was there in this world for her to see?

The man put his hand again on her shoulder in a half-kindly way, as if he knew the woman shrank from his touch, as if he now realized that she was far above his rank, one so different from him in every way as to seem almost of a different order of being.

She moved away from under his hand. She was almost callous as to what became of her; yet, even now, when she realized so fully how her fair lot was changed, she could not bear the contamination of that low man's touch.

The man saw that she loathed him, shrank from the touch of his hand as if it were pollution. He cared not for that. It might farther the purpose for which he came, yet he tried in his coarse way to comfort her.

"Don't cry that way," said he; "I daresay you have other boys. I have lost more children than one myself."

He spoke without thinking, and as soon as the words were uttered he would have recalled them were it possible.

"What do you say of your other sons?" asked his companion, raising her face, and looking full into his eyes as she spoke.

"I said that some of my other children were dead," was the reply, given in a hesitating manner, as if he feared the impression his words were likely to make.

"You are married to another, then?" said Eugenie, scanning his face with a courage surprising to herself as she spoke.

"I am," was the curt reply.

"If so, what brings you here? Why did you not seek me out twenty years ago?"

"I did so. I have tried to find you out ever since the wreck of the 'Royal Albert,' but it was impossible to hear anything of you."

"Why did you not go to Ireland to Colambre Castle, whence you took me?"

"I did, but it was then too late. You know I had not too much money to spend in following you through the world. I lost my Lieutenantcy by going to Cape Coast in search of you while my ship was under orders for India. I was then obliged to ship on board a merchantman, and it was only when I could find a ship bound for Galway that I seized the opportunity of rowing down to Colambre to see if you were there. When I went there the old house was chock-full of my own country folks. A London brewer had bought it for ten years, the old servants were all off, nobody knew anything about you."

How terribly the new phraseology in which his language was couched grated on the refined and sensitive ear to which it was addressed.

"And now," he thought, "when you are married to another, and that other woman has borne children to you, what is your purpose in coming here? You do not want two wives?"

"No," replied he, with perfect good humour, "but I like my first wife the best. Besides, you are my wife, the other is only an accident. I wouldn't have married her if I reckoned you was dead."

The sound of his own voice gave him courage, and he added:

"I suppose you like your first husband best too?"

"If you are Harry Neville, which, against the evidence of my eyes and ears, I fancy I must believe you are, you are so different from your former self that I could not willingly smother your hand or exchange words with you; and as to living with you as your wife I would not submit to such a humiliation for anything this world has to offer."

His sailor's thick eyes flashed fire as she spoke, and he raised his clenched hand as if he meant to strike her, but she neither quailed nor shrank under the ordeal.

He controlled his anger. It was not to obtain possession of the woman he came, but to make merchandise of his right to her, and he answered, in a tone of compromise:

"I mean for you to live with me if I please to do so, for you are my lawful, wedded wife. Here's our marriage lines that you sent from England when Harry was born, for fear you might die and the proof of his legitimacy would be lost."

He produced the paper as he spoke, taking it from an old, greasy-looking pocket-book which he drew from his bosom. Soiled as it was Eugenie recognized the pocket-book as one she had given to Harry Neville.

He noticed the look of recognition, and added:

"I have never parted from the certificate nor the pocket-book with your picture in it that you gave me. If you dislike me as you say, it would do me little good to force you to live with me; but if I give up my right to you of course you must pay me for doing it."

The man spoke coolly and deliberately, as if he were making a bargain for a horse or a dog.

"What do you mean by paying you? What do you want?"

"I want you to give me a thousand-pun note down on the nail."

A thousand pounds! Eugenie's heart sickened as she listened. Where was she to get a thousand pounds?

Neville mistook her silence for surprise at the smallness of his demand, and he hastily added:

"A thousand-pun note down on the nail, and a hundred-pun note sent every year, sent regular to my home. There's the name of the place, and my name too. It's little enough hush-money for a countless to pay for leave to live in a fine house like this, instead of the flat above Jim Skelton's beer-shop."

As he spoke he threw down on the table a coarse card, on which was written, in a cramped hand:

"Mr. Harry Neville, Esq., care of Jim Skelton, first door round the corner to Hoar's wharf, Lunnon."

Her breath came faint and quick, and her cheek reddened with shame as she looked on the card of the man whom she had left her uncle's house in the midnight to follow, and whom she had almost worshipped for five years, and she said, in her heart:

"Would that I had gone down to the bottom of the sea in the 'Royal Albert' with my child!"

"I have not a thousand pounds in the world," Eugenie said, with a look and voice of dismay.

"Don't tell me!" he replied, in a serious, business-like way. "A lady with all this finery about her! This wasn't bought for nothing."

"The cottage and all it contains belong to my husband. I am quite unable to give you money—I have none."

His manner became so familiar, his voice so boisterous and coarse while he spoke unrestrainedly in the low slang to which he was accustomed, that if Eugenie had possessed the sum he asked she would have freely given it to be rid of him for a day.

"My watch and chain cost five hundred pounds—will you take it?" said Eugenie, taking off her watch set with diamonds on the back and edge, and laying it on the table.

Neville lifted it up. The sight put him in better humour.

"It's a pretty little thing. I'll take it in part payment, say half, but you paid a confounded long price for it. However, I'll not be hard on you. Now what's going to make up the rest?"

All the jewels Eugenie had in the world, with the exception of those belonging to her husband's family, would not amount, in money value, to a hundred pounds. She thought of this, and how useless it was to offer them to the rapacious, unscrupulous man.

"Come, hurry," exclaimed he, with insolent familiarity. "If ye sit like that all the morning, the tide'll be out, and the ship high and dry; I want to spell my name Jim Walker afore that ugly Russian wi' his beard comes back, or if I don't, faith, maybe I'll lose my watch and you your good place."

Eugenie sickened with shame as she heard the unscrupulous, low man, whom she both loathed and feared, couple her with himself in a scheme to deceive, if not defraud, the noble man she loved and honoured. How much she loved him she never knew till now.

"All the jewels I have in the world do not amount to one hundred pounds," said Eugenie, in a voice which sounded hollow with despair.

"Well, you know best. You either come wi' me, or give me the rhine, I'm indifferent which. It's regular mean to back out and expect me to take six hundred for a thousand; howsomdever, if this watch is yours, it's mine; I'll put that in my pocket anyhow, and keep it safe for you till you come home to Jim Skelton's flat."

A tap at the door was followed by Lovell, who said:

"A person on business wishes to speak with you, my lady."

"You know, Lovell, I can see no one just now," Eugenie spoke as if it were a great effort to utter the words.

"My lady, it is one who has explained his business to me, and it is most urgent."

Eugenie raised her eyes with a pleading look to the servant's face.

"My lady, saving your presence, it is almost imperative that you see him."

She rose with a languid air, as if her limbs would scarcely support her, and crossing the hall outside the garden-room, entered a reception-chamber on the other side.

As the countess entered the faithful servant shut the door, and putting a bank receipt for five hundred pounds in her hand, said:

"My lady, this is money I received from your honoured uncle; will you condescend to keep it for me?"

"Oh, Lovell!"

She could say no more. Had the old man not placed her on a seat she would have fallen fainting at his feet.

"I had better pay the man and send him away."

Lovell took the bank-draft from her unresisting hand, and going into the garden-room placed it in that of Neville.

He took the draft, looked at it, turned it over in every direction, read every word, and saw that it was payable at Glyn's, London. That was all right, but he had his doubts as to the name on the back.

"Whose name is this?" said he, reading. "Patrick Lovell. Who is that?"

"The name of as good a man as yourself," was the reply. "If you do not find it honoured, write to the house of Rothschild here—I warrant they will pay it."

"If that's it they'll pay it now?" said the sailor, inquiringly.

"Certainly they will."

The sailor turned on his heel, and was out of the cottage and half down the drive in a few seconds.

"When is your master coming back?" asked he of the servant, who stood watching until he should see him pass the gate.

"Not till to-morrow."

"Not till to-morrow," repeated the fellow. "Whew!" He gave a low whistle and a chuckling laugh, saying to himself:

"Maybe I'll come back to bid her ladyship good-bye afore I go."

CHAPTER VIII.

Tremble, thou wretch,
That hast within thee unnumbered crimes
Unwhipped of justice, Shakespeare.

A WEEK from the day in which Ethel encountered Sir Ralph coming out from the spring panel she was the occupant of a padded cell in Bethany Hospital for the insane.

Every day of the past week she had been subjected to the importunities of a man she loathed with her whole soul.

Of her child she knew nothing, except that she was torn from him in the midnight, and hurried off to the place of misery in which she now dwelt.

Sir Ralph had twice visited her, each time offering to release her on condition of her giving her promise to marry him the very day he took her from the cell, promising that then her child should be restored to her—a promise which, like himself, was false to the core. At the time he made it he knew no more of where the child was than she did herself—had known nothing of him from the day he went with Ethel to the madhouse.

All he knew was what he had been told when he came home that the child had been playing in the outer corridor of his mother's apartments in the evening, and when the woman who had charge of him went to put him to bed he was not to be found, nor was he seen again.

Sir Ralph's solution of the mystery, connected with the child's disappearance from a corridor which had no outlet save through the window of a locked room, was that the child had fallen over and been killed, and to save themselves from blame the servants had tied a stone round the neck of the body and thrown it into the lake.

He made no inquiry; he was pleased to be rid so quietly of one who, in the years to come, it was possible might give him trouble.

To Sir Ralph's importunities Ethel's reply was always the same:

"I will live and die here rather than in the queen's palace as your wife."

"Well," said Sir Ralph, "if you do not choose to become Lady of Trevynian Castle you may live for ninety years, but you shall die in this madhouse and be buried among the unclaimed dead. If you are not mad before five years pass over your head it will be the one instance in the history of a woman being able to resist the influence of the mad men and mad women among whom she lives. With your nervous temperament before a year you will be a gibbering idiot, mothing and mumbling among the rest, raving with frenzy and knocking your head against the wall the half of your time, the other half crouching on the ground and wailing with maddened sorrow."

"Even so; with such a fate before me I will never bear your name, never with my will come near enough to you to permit of your touching my hand or polluting my cheek with your breath."

"Bravely said," replied Sir Ralph, grinding his teeth as he spoke. "We'll see if you hold out. Do you know what the straps are? Those gentle measures which wise men like myself sometimes deem necessary to be taken with contumacious damsels."

Ethel shuddered as the man spoke; she did not know exactly what he meant, but she had heard cries of agony since she had been an inmate of that house that told her there were instruments of torture there the use of which would make the stoutest heart quail.

It was but a second of weakness. She thought of her husband.

Since the moment she looked in Sir Ralph's eyes, as he came out from the spring panel, and noted the guilty, terrified look of his ashen face, she felt sure her husband lived, and, in some mysterious manner connected with that panel in the wardrobe, was in Sir Ralph's power.

Steeled and strengthened by these thoughts, which would have unsettled the brain of one stronger than herself, she replied:

"I have prayed to the God whom I serve every night since I came here, and He is able to deliver me out of the burning, fiery furnace, and though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him."

Sir Ralph sought an interview with the doctor to whom the place belonged.

"I do not see any improvement in the temper of the young woman I gave into your charge; she has been here now three weeks. I told you if you brought her to terms in that time I would give you five hundred pounds. Now look here, I'll tell you what, if you can get her to agree to what I propose by next week I'll make it a thousand. You had better put on a straight waistcoat, and give her a dose of the lash to stir her up."

The doctor was an unscrupulous man, but he was also a cautious man. He knew that such things had been found out before, and had been the ruin of the perpetrators. It was a great bribe. He would consult his wife, who was an able coadjutor.

"I wish, Bessie, you would give me a glass of brandy. I feel desperate shaky and cold like."

The words were spoken late in the evening by Doctor Grindwood to his helpmate, who, in the comfortable warmth and confusion of her own dirty par-

lour, sat darning the doctor's gray worsted socks, while a stew of fresh beef and onions simmering on the fire gave a strong odour to the apartment, and at the same time promise of a savory supper.

"Now then"—Mrs. Grindwood always prefaced her words by now then—"you do look white like. I hope to gracious you're not going to take one o' them tremens turns," was the reply of his better-half, as she looked inquiringly in the doctor's face.

"Not likely. I ain't been drinkin' hardly a drop for a month, 'cept what a man like me must drink in the way of business. That's capital stuff," continued the doctor, smacking his lips; "it does me good already. Ye keep a good glass for yer own use, at any rate."

"Good or bad ye never lets the bottom o' the bottle get dry afore ye turn up yer own little finger over't twice for my once."

"I may take a glass more than ordinary the night, if I close wi' the offer I got from the gentleman that brought the yellow-haired woman here three weeks ago."

"Now then?" replied the woman, in a sarcastic tone, "is that the fellow that promised you five hundred pounds if you would make the woman willing to marry him?"

"The very man."

By this time the doctor had filled a short black pipe full of coarse tobacco, with which he was sojacking himself, filling the room with its fumes, while he sat just in front of the fire, his heels resting on the mantelshelf.

"Now, then," said the woman, laying down the gray worsted sock in her lap and looking at her husband with a grave expression, as if she doubted his sanity, "ye're easy made believe. How can you be sure he's got five hundred pence to give? There's more wind than warship in your long-legged lubber."

"I know he's paid me up to the mark already, and if I try the straps and lash her up a bit he'll have to pay the money down afore the work's done."

"Put the straps on that quiet woman!"

"Ay, put the straps on her and touch her up wi' the lash too. It's himself that spoke o't; being as he's goin' to marry her I'd never thought o' mentionin' such a thing."

"Now then, it's a great risk. Ye'll need to make sure o' yer money or ye'll never touch a brass farthin' o't."

"I'll make all that fair and square afore I finish. Give us another caulk. I think I'll put the straps on her the night, and give her a touch or two just for a taste o' what the soldiers get when they desert, and tell her if she'll not make up her mind to marry she'll get more to-morrow."

"But what are ye goin' to git for't. Mind I tell ye it's a great risk. If one o' the bulldogs find ye out he'll keep that back over your neck all your days. What's he goin' to give you?"

"One thousand pounds," was the reply, the doctor speaking in a solemn tone and pausing between each word, telling to the woman's practised ear that the man was half-drunk, a state in which his usually ferocious disposition was made doubly so, and she shrugged her shoulders with an uneasy gesture as she said:

"Now, then, if you put your beauties on her, and give her a taste of your lash to-night she'll need somebody to turn her in her bed to-morrow; she'll not be apt to do't herself. If ye're sure o' the thousand pounds it's a good price, but it's a great risk."

"I'm sure enough, and I'll risk it," the man replied, in a surly, determined tone. "The bulldogs are all abed but Somerset Tom. He's but a young un, and it's easy throwing dust in his eyes. He never saw the straps—wouldn't know what they were if he did see them. I'll risk it. One thousand pounds is no joke."

The doctor, who had now talked himself into a brutal fit, started up as he spoke, and taking up a brass candlestick, in which was stuck to one side the half of a tallow candle, he lit it at the bar of the grate, and was about to leave the room, when he espied a girl lying asleep on a sofa in the other end of the apartment. Pointing with his forefinger towards the girl he said, in low tones, to his wife:

"Fan's there; she couldn't hear could she?"

"Now then, what put that in your head? She's as sound as a top. Be off to your work; I'll rouse her, and she'll be in her bed afore your back from lookin' the doors."

"Fan! Fan!" the woman called out in a loud voice, as her husband, armed with a great bunch of keys, left the room.

Fan rose slowly to her feet. She had not been asleep, but had been for the last half-hour listening with horror to the words she understood as well as the woman to whom they were addressed.

She remembered but too well the bruised, broken mass which mammy, the old nurse, had taken her

into a cell to look at before it was huddled into a nameless grave only two months ago.

She had several times seen and spoken to the fair-haired woman who was now to be subjected to the same treatment, perhaps to die under it as the strong man had done.

The girl rose with a sleepy air, stretched her arms and yawned as if yet but half-awake.

"Give me my supper," said she, addressing the woman, who held out a plate full of stewed meat towards her without speaking.

Fan took the plate and began eating, while she stood by the fire, looking vacantly at the blazing coals, her thoughts intent on the fair-haired woman.

"Now then! take your supper to your own room, and lock your door. Father's in one of his tantrums to-night, so you'd better keep out of his way."

Fan left the room, muttering under her breath: "I'll clear out of this house, and his way too, as quick as I can; maybe he'll take the straps and the lash to me some day if I don't marry some old fellow. I wonder where Tom is," said she, as she reached the door of her room, still speaking to herself with bated breath.

CAST ON THE WORLD.

CHAPTER XXII.

Oh, what a weary, weary road it was, winding up, and up, and seeming to the tired and heated Oliver as if it could never end. Walking was always to him a slow process, and nothing but the thought of what lay beyond could have kept him up and moving on until his poor, crippled feet were blistered, and his head was throbbing with pain. Not once during that tedious journey did a single person pass him; all were going the other way, and the heroic Oliver was almost fainting from exhaustion when, from the brow of a steep hill, he saw the church spire flashing in the sunlight, and knew he was almost at his journey's end.

Mildred was alone in her chamber, her head resting upon the soft pillows which little Edith had arranged, her hands clasped over her face, and her thoughts with Lawrence Thornton, when a servant entered, bearing a card, and saying that the gentleman who sent it was in the parlour below.

"Oliver Hawkins!"

And Mildred almost screamed as she read the name.

"Dear, dear Oliver! show him up at once."

The servant departed, and in a moment the well-known step was heard upon the stairs, and, darting forward, Mildred passed her arm around him, or he would have fallen, for he was very weak and faint.

"Mildred, dear Mildred!" was all he could at first articulate.

And, sinking upon the sofa, he motioned her to remove his shoes from his swollen feet.

"Did you walk from the station?" she asked, in much surprise.

"Yes," he whispered. "There was no one to bring me."

"What made you? What made you?" she continued.

And he replied:

"I couldn't wait, for I have come to bring you joyful news; to tell you that you are free to marry Lawrence—that you are not his father's grandchild. It was all a wicked fraud got up by Geraldine Veille, who would have Lawrence marry her sister. I heard her telling grandmother last night, and hiring her to say she found a paper among my mother's things confirming Esther Bennett's story. Oh, Milly, Milly, you hurt!" he cried, as in her excitement she pressed hard upon his blistered feet.

Those poor feet! How Mildred loved them then! how she pitied and caressed them, holding them carefully in her lap, and dropping tears upon them, as she thought of the weary way they had come to bring her this great joy—this joy too good to be believed until Oliver related every particular, beginning with the time when Lawrence first came back to Beechwood.

He did not, however, tell her how, day and night, until his own brain grew dizzy, he had sung to the maniac of the maid with the nut-brown hair, nor did he tell her of anything that he had done, except to overhear what Geraldine had said; but Mildred could guess it all—could understand just how noble and self-denying he had been, and the blessings she breathed upon him came from a sincere heart.

"Oh, Olly, darling Olly," she said, still caressing his wounded feet, "the news is too good to be true! I dare not hope again lest I be cruelly disappointed, and I could not bear another shock. I have suffered

so much that my heart is almost numb; and though you tell me I am free to marry Lawrence, I'm afraid there's some mistake, and that I am his sister Helen's daughter after all. If I am not, Olly, who am I? Who was my mother? Where is she now? And where is my father?"

There were tears in Mildred's eyes—they choked her utterance as she said these last words, which, nevertheless, were distinctly heard in the adjoining rooms where Richard Wilton sat, his face as white as ashes, his eyes unnaturally bright, and a compressed look about the mouth as if he had received some dreadful shock—something which shook his heart-strings as they never were shaken before.

He was reading by his window when Mildred met Oliver in the hall, and through the open door he heard distinctly the name "Mildred, dear Mildred!" and heard the girl he knew as Minnie answer to that name. Then the lettered page before him was one blur, the room round him was enveloped in darkness, and with his hearing quickened he sat like a block of stone listening, listening, listening, till every uncertainty was swept away, and from the depths of his inmost soul came heaving up "My child, my Mildred!" But though his heart uttered the words, his lips gave forth no sound, and he sat there immovable, while the great drops of perspiration trickled down his face and fell upon his nerveless hands, folded so helplessly together. Then he attempted to rise, but as often sank back exhausted, for the shock had deprived him of his strength and made him weak as a child.

But when Mildred asked, "Where is my father now?" he rose with wondrous effort and, tottering to her door, stood gazing at her with a look in which the tender love of eighteen years was all embodied.

Oliver saw him first, for Mildred's back was towards him, and to her he softly whispered:

"Turn your head, Milly. There's some one at the door."

Then Mildred looked, but started quickly when she saw Richard Wilton, his every feature convulsed with the emotions he could not express, and his arms stretched imploringly towards her, as if beseeching her to come to their embrace.

"My daughter, my daughter!" he said at last, and though it was but a whisper it reached the ear of Mildred, and, with a scream of unutterable joy, she went forward to an embrace such as she had never known before.

Oh, it was strange to see that strong man weep as he did over his beautiful daughter, but tears did him good, and he wept on until the fountain was dried up, murmuring, "Mildred, my darling, my first-born, my baby—Hetty's and mine. Heaven be praised, who brought me to see your face when I believed you dead!" and all the while he said this he was smoothing her shiny hair, looking into her eyes, and kissing her girlish face, so much like his own as it used to be, save that it was softer and more feminine.

Wonderingly Oliver looked at them, seeking in vain for a clue with which to unravel the mystery, but when Mildred, remembering him, at last said: "Oliver, this is Richard Wilton," he needed nothing more to tell him that he had witnessed the meeting between a father and his child.

To Mildred the truth came suddenly with the words, "My daughter." Like a flash of light broke on her—the secret marriage with Hetty Kirby—her strong resemblance to the Wiltons, and all the circumstances connected with her first arrival at Beechwood. There could be no mistake, and with a cry of joy she sprang to meet her father as he was described.

"I heard what he told you," Richard said at last, motioning to Oliver. "I heard him call you Mildred, and from your conversation knew you were the child once left at my father's door. You were my darling baby then; you are my beautiful Mildred now," and he hugged her closer in his arms.

Very willingly Mildred suffered her fair head to rest upon his bosom, for it gave to her a feeling of security she had never before experienced, for never before had she known what it was to feel a father's heart throbbing in unison with her own. Suddenly a new thought occurred to her, and starting up, she exclaimed:

"Edith, father, Edith!"

"I'm to-morrow, with lots of flowers," answered a childish voice, and Oliver heard a pair of little feet through the hall.

In a moment she was with them, her curls blown over her face, and her white apron full of the flowers she had gathered for Minnie, "cause she was so ill."

"Precious little sister!"

And Mildred's arms closed convulsively around the wondering child, whose flowers were scattered over the carpet, and who thought more of gathering them up than of paying very close attention to what her father told her of Minnie's being Mildred, her sister, whom they thought was dead.

At last Edith began to understand, and, rubbing her fat, round cheek against Mildred's, she said:

"I so glad you're my sister, and have come back to us from Heaven. Why didn't you bring mamma and the baby with you?"

It was in vain they tried to explain; Edith was rather too young to comprehend exactly what they meant.

The interview between Mildred and Edith helped to restore Richard's scattered senses, and after awhile he said to Mildred:

"Has my daughter no curiosity to know why I left her as I did, and why I have never been to inquire for her?"

"Yes, father," answered Mildred, "I want so much to hear—but I thought it might disturb you. Will you tell us now?"

And nestling closer to his side, with Edith on her lap, she listened breathlessly, while he repeated to her what she did not already know.

"I have told you," he said, "of my father's bitterness towards Hetty Kirby, and how, with the help of a companion whom I could trust, I took her to London, and was married, but I did not tell you how, after the lapse of time, there was born to the beardless college boy a smiling little infant.

"As soon as possible I hastened to Hetty's bedside, but the shadow of death was there before me, and one glance at her sweet young face assured me that she would die. 'Twas then that I regretted having kept our marriage a secret from my father, for I felt that I should need his sympathy in the dark hour coming. Something, too, must be done with you, so soon to be made motherless.

"Hetty was the first to suggest disposing of you as I did. She knew my education was not yet completed, and, laying her soft hand on my head, she said:

"My boy-husband wants to go through college and if it becomes known that he has been married those stern men may expel him. Your father, too, will turn you off, as soon as he learns that I have been your wife. I know how strong his prejudices are when once they have been roused, and if he knew our baby had in it a drop of Hetty's blood, he would spurn it from him, and so he must not know it. My grandmother will not last long, and when we are both dead send baby to him secretly. Don't let him know who she is, or whence she came, until he has learned to love her. Then tell him she is yours."

"This is what Hetty said; and in an unguarded moment I promised to do her bidding, for I was young and dreaded my father's wrath. Not long after this Hetty died, with her baby folded to her bosom and her lips murmuring a prayer that Heaven would move the heart of the stern old man to care for her little wail."

"Her grandmother also died in a few day, and, then, with the exception of the nurse, I was alone with you, my daughter, in the low brown house you visited with me, I little dreaming that the baby who in that west room first opened its eyes to the light of day was standing there beside me, a beautiful young maiden.

"This place is thinly populated now; it was far more so then, and of the few neighbours near none seemed to be curious at all, and when told that I should take the child to my own home they made no particular comments. The same friend, Tom Chesebro, who had helped me in my marriage, now came to my aid again, planning and arranging the affair. We started together for Beechwood, and, tolerably well skilled in the matters to which I was a novice. I found him of invaluable service in taking care of you, whom I carried in my arms. Before reaching Beechwood he left me, taking you with him in a basket which he procured, and giving you, as he afterward told me, something to make you sleep. I never could understand exactly how he contrived to avoid observation as he did, but it was dusk when he left me, and the darkness favoured him. After placing you on the steps, he waited at a little distance until my father, or rather Tiger, took you in, and then, when it was time, went to the railway station, where I met him as I was stepping from the carriage. In a whisper he told me that all was safe, and with a somewhat lightened heart I hurried on."

"To a certain extent you know what followed; know that Hannah Hawkins took care of you for a time, while the villagers gossiped as villagers will, and my father swore lustily at them all. Several times I attempted to tell him, but his determined hatred of you decided me to wait until time and your glowing beauty had somewhat softened his heart. At last my failing health made a change of climate necessary for me, and as Tom Chesebro was going on a voyage to New Zealand, I decided to accompany him, and then, for the first time confided my secret to Hannah Hawkins, bidding her put you in father's way as much as possible, and in case I died, to tell him who you were. Then I visited Hetty's

grave, determining while there to tell my father myself; and this, on my return, I endeavoured to do, but the moment I confessed to him my marriage, he flew into a most violent rage, ordering me to leave the room and never come into his presence again. Then when I suggested that there was more to tell, he said he had heard enough, and, with a hard, defiant feeling, I left him, resolving that it should be long ere he saw my face again.

"We had a pleasant voyage, but remorse was gnawing at my heart, and when we reached our destined port, none thought the boy, as they called me, would ever cross the sea again. But I grew daily better, and when, at last, poor Tom died of a prevailing fever, I was able to do for him the very office he had expected to do for me.

"After a time I went to India, having heard nothing from home, although I had written to my father twice and to Hannah once. I am ashamed to confess it, my darling, but it is nevertheless the truth, that continued absence and the new scenes amid which I found myself in India made me somewhat indifferent to you—less anxious to see your face; and still when I had been gone from you nearly eight years, I resolved upon coming home, and was making my plans to do so when accident threw in my way a poor, worn-out sailor. He was suffering and I cared for him, learning by the means that he had friends in the vicinity of Beechwood, and that he had visited them just before his last voyage. Very adroitly I questioned him to see if he knew aught of the gable roof, or the child adopted by Hannah Hawkins. He must have been misinformed, for he said that Hannah Hawkins and the little girl both were dead, and that one was buried while he was there.

"Oh, I can explain that," interrupted Mildred; "I was very ill with scarlet fever when Hannah died. The doctor said I would not live, while Mrs. Simms, a wonderful gossip, reported that I was dead."

"That must have been the cause of the misunderstanding," returned Richard, "for the sailor told me you died of scarlet fever, and, crediting his statement, I had no longer a desire to return, but remained in India, amassing wealth, until I met with Edith's angel mother. Owing to her blessed influence I became, as I trust, a better man, though I obstinately refused to write to my father, as she often wished me to do. On her death-bed, however, I promised that I would come home and comfort his old age. I knew that he was alive, for I sometimes saw his name in the papers which came in my way, but I had no conception of the joyful surprise awaiting me." And he fondly kissed Mildred's glowing cheek.

"The moment I saw your face I was struck with its resemblance to my sister's; and to myself I said; 'If it were possible I should say that is my daughter.' Then the thought came over me, 'The sailor was perhaps mistaken,' and I managed to learn your name, which swept away all hope, especially when afterwards you told me that your mother was Helen Thornton. There has evidently been some deep-laid scheme to rob you of your birthright and of a husband, and, as I do not quite understand it, will you please to explain to me what it is about this Geraldine Velle and Esther Bennett? Who is the latter, and why is she interested in you?"

Briefly as possible Mildred told him of all that had come to her during his absence, of the fraud imposed upon her by Geraldine, of Oliver's unfeeling kindness, and how but for the wicked deception she would that night have been a bride.

"You only deferred the marriage until your father came," said Mr. Wilton, kissing her again, and telling her how on the morrow they would go together to Beechwood, and, confronting the sinful Geraldine, overthrow her plans.

"And you, young man," he continued, turning to Oliver, "you, it seems, have been the truest friend my Milly ever had. For this I owe you a life-long debt of gratitude; and though I am perhaps too young to have been your father, you shall be to me henceforth a brother. My home shall be your home, and if money can repay you for your kindness it shall be yours even to tens of thousands."

With a choking voice Oliver thanked the generous man, thinking to himself the while that a home far more glorious than any Richard Wilton could offer to his acceptance would ere long be his. But he did not say so, and when Mildred, in her old, impulsive way, wound her arms around his neck, and said: "Father cannot have you Olly, for you will stay with me and be my own darling brother," he gently put her from him, saying:

"Yes, Milly, as long as I live I will be your brother."

It was very late ere they separated, for Mr. Wilton was loth to leave his newly-recovered treasure, while Oliver was never weary of feasting his eyes upon Mildred's beautiful and now perfectly happy face. But they said good-night at last, Richard taking

Oliver to his own room, where he could nurse his poor, bruised feet, while Mildred kept Edith with her, hugging her closer to her bosom as she thought:

"She is my sister."

At an early hour next morning the three assembled together again, and when the lumbering old stage rattled down the one long street it carried Richard and Oliver, Mildred and Edith, the first two silent and thoughtful, the last two merry and glad as singing birds, for the heart of one was full of "daddy Wilton," while the other thought only of Lawrence Thornton and the blissful meeting awaiting her.

(To be continued.)

MEASURING DISTANCES BY SOUND.

MAJOR DE BOULENGE, of the Belgian army, has recently devised an instrument for the above purpose, which he calls a battle telemeter, and which appears to give remarkably accurate results. The apparatus consists of a glass tube having graduations along its length representing distances measured. The tube is closed at its extremities, and is filled with liquid in which is a metallic traveller, formed of two discs united by a central rod. The diameter of the discs is a little less than that of the tube, so that when the latter is vertical the traveller will descend with a slow and uniform motion. A brass covering protects the glass, and has a slit through which the scale and traveller can be seen. Knowing the velocity of sound and that of the traveller, it is easy to construct the distance scale.

In operation, the edge of one disc is brought to the 0 mark; and the instrument being held horizontally, the flash of the cannon, for example, is noted; at that instant the telemeter is turned to a vertical position, and so held, the traveller, of course, descending meanwhile, until the sound is heard, when it is again brought horizontal. The position of the traveller denotes the distance to be read on the scale.

It is stated that, during the course of official experiments at the Belgian Artillery School, the instrument, in estimating distances of 3,200 yards, did not make over 21 yards error, a quantity certainly insignificant when other causes or irregularities in firing are taken into consideration.

The force of the wind is said to have but little effect in impairing its accuracy, and the error due to temperature may be corrected by using, as the fluid, a mixture of alcohol and water in proper proportions.

WHEN THE SHIP COMES HOME.

CHAPTER XXVII.

'Tis sweet to hear the watch-dog's honest bark
Bay deep-mouthed welcome as we draw near home;

'Tis sweet to know there is an eye will mark
Our coming and look brighter when we come.

Byron.

EDWARD TEMPLE, with a physician, who accompanied Francis Hopetown, was following the invalid's carriage in a Newport Pagnel. Both heard Ellen Temple's cry, and, lashing the full-blooded young horse into a gallop, appeared at the carriage window before the coachman could bring the ponderous vehicle to a full stop.

Ellen had Frank's head pillowed on her breast, a look of terror was on her face, and her eyes rained tears down upon his upturned brow.

"Mrs. Hopetown, what is the matter?" asked the physician, going at once to his patient and placing him in a reclining position.

"Dead!" moaned Ellen, "Francis, Francis!"

"Do not distress yourself, Mrs. Hopetown; your husband is not dead. Fatigue and excitement have made him swoon. There is no cause for alarm."

Restoratives were at once administered, and in less than twenty minutes the carriage proceeded towards the park through the village.

News of the arrival of the master of Craythorpe had preceded Frank, and the villagers and tenantry had flocked out to greet him, to offer him welcome and good wishes in a solemn, almost silently earnest way that proved how deeply they felt for their young master in his present condition.

At a slow pace the cortège proceeded; the rustics lined the way, and, bareheaded, cast longing, wistful glances into the windows of the invalid's carriage.

"Bow to them, Nell," said Frank, who heard the murmur of their voices. "Let them see you, my pet."

Ellen, smiling, for she knew that this was said in admiration of her beauty, an admiration which Francis fondly believed everybody else must share, went close to the open windows of the carriage and bowed to the simple-hearted, hard-toiling rustic folk to whom she would have to be as a mother to a large flock who looked forward hopefully to the

guidance, the charity, and the counsel of this young creature.

The bells of the ancient church, the patrimony of a Craythorpe in commemoration of the Reformation, pealed merrily, as merrily as they had ever done when clanging their loud-tongued welcome to the new master of Craythorpe.

A deepening murmur of admiration and a waving of hats and handkerchiefs responded to Ellen's smiling acknowledgment of their kindly greeting.

At the park gates the crowd was very dense. The rector was there to greet his new patron, who like the tenantry, had not seen this young man since he came as a pale, pretty-faced boy, who used to ride a shaggy-coated pony, and trespass upon other people's lands to fish, not because the fishing was better there than in the Craythorpe streams, but because there is a strong vein of contrariness in every boy's nature, and he loves that most which is prohibited.

At the gate there was something of a demonstration. The carriage halted, and the rector, a kindly-looking old gentleman, who looked the living embodiment of the Vicar of Wakefield, stepped up to the carriage door, which was opened for him, and after paying his respects to Ellen turned a face full of sorrow and emotion to the invalid.

He addressed a few simple words of welcome to Frank and murmured a prayer, whose brevity did not spoil its pathos, for the speedy recovery of Francis Hopetown.

Voices began to murmur in the crowd: "How's master, yer reverence?" cried some of the women whose anxious faces peered over the shoulders of others in front.

The rector's benign face was turned towards them when the cry arose, then he turned his head away and spoke to some one within the carriage. A few moments' dead stillness and the anxious faces grew more anxious.

Were they, who had so long looked forward to this day to be disappointed and see nothing of their new mistress and master. For most of the good people gathered about the park gates, were the labourers and agriculturists employed directly on the estate, and who had chafed bitterly under the tyranny of the farm bailiff and the trustee, a country attorney.

The rector addressed the people in a very few words, saying that the master of Craythorpe, though stricken down, would, by the blessing of Heaven, soon recover and be amongst them.

There was a cheer then which swelled into a roar when Ellen's sweet face appeared at the carriage window, and the carriage drove on.

The servants were all waiting at the door of the splendid house. There was no bustle or confusion, the physician and Edward Temple had ridden on in advance, and everything necessary for the invalid's reception had been done.

With what gladness and pride did Frank find himself here, master of Craythorpe, which had seen so many generations in and as many out, which for centuries had sent its direct heir and representative to Parliament, and nobly upheld the dignity of the house and the constitution of the country.

Ellen, too, felt a glow of triumph and unpeakable joy at being mistress here. What a course was open to her now! what a life fate had allotted her! and in return for what? A pure and womanly devotion to the wayward boy who had been all but wrecked in the dangerous channels of dissipation.

"My first visit must not be a long one," said Edward, "nor will it, I fancy, be the least happy of the visits to come."

"Nor the most happy, Edward," answered Ellen. "I hope not."

"You have no fear of Frank's recovery then?"

"None. Why should I, when his physician is so confident of his speedy recovery? No, my child, you have everything to be thankful for, as one of the happiest and luckiest of Dame Fortune's chosen few."

"But poor, dear Frank's troubles are not over yet. His stepmother is a bold woman, and her son, I fancy, an unscrupulous man."

Edward smiled.

"There is little to fear from either. The most that can happen is some heavy law expenses, which are absolutely necessary for the adjustment of the claim."

"And John Hopetown?"

"He will very soon be unseated, Nell. Sooner than he expects," replied Edward, who in his bold way had fully made up his mind to trample under foot all the difficulties which had been so mercifully woven round the young master of Craythorpe.

Down here, away from the worry of his enemies, Frank began speedily to pick up again. As his mind became tranquil his strength returned. In three days he was taking a drive with Ellen over the estates, on the fifth day he was out again, and on the Sunday drove through the village to the church. The church was crowded. The fame of Ellen's beauty and queenly glance and affability had spread, had gone far and wide; Frank's interesting illness,

added to the attempts of his enemies to injure him, had set rampant curiosity on the qui vive. All Craythorpe looked to the church to catch a glimpse of the young and handsome pair, the boyish master and splendid, child-like mistress of the ancient home of the Craythorpes.

Frank's elegant figure and poetical, handsome face won the hearts of the ladies, while his simple earnestness at prayer, his attention and devotion to his young wife made him popular with the men. It required now only his perfect convalescence for him to be lionized.

The deep interest that was manifested in his behalf made a lasting impression upon him. He was not forgotten by the minister, who offered a thanksgiving for his recovery.

"This is the second step in a new life, Nell," said Frank, as they drove back to Craythorpe. "I think they may make a rational being and a Christian of me after all."

"What was the first step in your new life?" asked Ellen.

"Marrying you, my pet."

"And yet it has brought trouble upon you."

"I shall be none the worse for that, Nell. A little real trouble seasons a man's energies and makes him feel better for the trial. What say you, Ned?"

"A man should be tried a little, Frank. One who has never known a trouble would possibly be somewhat heartless and selfish and thoughtless to those who had."

"Yes, and I contemplate with horror that growing passion of this bitter age."

"Which?"

"Selfishness," answered Frank. "I have from mere choice seen more of the struggles and trials of our poor brethren than people think, and for the struggling man this, I repeat, a bitter age."

"And a selfish one," said Edward, who was thinking of his journey to London on the morrow and what he had to do. His mental vision still dwelt on Amy's diary. He was thinking of Ruhl and of the purpose that was to bring them together again. He did not trouble Frank with these affairs now. It was unnecessary until his presence would be required.

Before he left Craythorpe on the following morning Frank sent for him.

"I should like a few words with you, old boy," he said. "I know you are hastening back on my affairs. I don't know what I should have done without you, my dear old Ned."

"I rather fancy that it was something more than chance that sent me back here amongst you," replied Edward, "and at such a time. Was it only chance, too, that so threw me and John Hopetown together?"

"Surely no. However much we may be laughed at for fatalists I cannot, but believe with Shakespeare that there are stranger things existing in this world than come between Heaven and our philosophy."

"I am afraid that custom overthrows reason far too much in these commonplace times."

"Or blunts our faith in the higher order of things. It is the age of naturalism. For myself, I believe the mind capable of a separate existence, else where would be those almost divine inspirations which have brought men out of the ruck of obscurity and the slough of ignorance to make them shine as masters in the higher professions, which have denoted art and literature—the brightest gems of civilisation throughout the nations of Europe?"

"I used to feel such sentiments once Frank, but such a life as I have led blunts the higher susceptibilities of the mind."

"I can understand that, Ned. By the way, what is that scrap of paper you are so carefully nursing up there?"

"It is the placard bearing the description of the man whom John Hartpool and Charles Ruhl found drowned in the Serpentine."

"Brinsley Congreve, poor fellow."

"Yes," said Edward, with a strange smile. "Did you ever read it?"

"No. And why do you keep it?"

"I will tell you. Read it over carefully first."

Frank took the placard and read it with some interest.

"Well," he said, "the description accords with what I remember Congreve to have been."

"But he was like your cousin, was he not?"

"Yes, in style, height and build. The resemblance was not striking when they were together, but apart it was noticeable."

"Then they were alike, and relations, were they not?"

"Yes. Why?"

"Because," said Edward Temple, gravely and impressively, "the scar upon the neck and the other on the lower part of the thigh are the marks by which I and many others could swear identity to John Hopetown. He received the scar on the neck when with me on a visit to Biljoy's rancho on our travels down West."

"Great Heavens!" cried Frank, starting up on his couch, and remaining in a sitting posture. "Do you mean to even hint that Congreve and his friend murdered poor John and robbed him that his body should be identified as that of another?"

"The case looks black, Frank, and but that I have met some remarkable coincidences which make me believe in Fate I should say that there had been a cold-blooded conspiracy and a deliberate murder. On the other hand it is possible that poor John at last sought that refuge from despair, that eternal rest for which his weary heart had so long yearned."

"Heaven grant that of the two it may be the latter," said Frank, who had scarcely recovered from the horror of this dreadful discovery. "But it will be hard to make the world believe them guiltless should your suspicions prove correct."

"Then you still doubt this man to be an impostor?"

"I cannot think that so many of us could be deceived in such a manner."

"My dear Frank, with John Hopetown dead and buried in the name of his neglected friend, his watch, and perhaps documents of some material use in carrying out the fraud, in the possession of his relation, there is very little difficulty in deceiving John Hopetown's oldest friends, who could do it better than Brinsley Congreve, who, apart from being a relation, was John Hopetown's almost daily companion for years."

"You are accounting for the resemblance and also for the difference in the manner of John Hopetown as you found him abroad and as he is now," said Frank.

"Precisely," smiled Edward. "And had not Providence sent John Hopetown wandering through the Far West no one would have known of the infamous fraud, for those who like myself were a witness to this wound in your cousin's neck would never have thought of questioning the impostor upon it, and the resemblance, together with the lapse of years and the difference in the circumstances, would have sufficiently misled such casual acquaintances."

"But after all, my dear Ned, we are merely talking on surmise or upon an undiscovered fact."

"Can we doubt the fact or the discovery of the fact when we look at the terrible amount of proof, positive evidence of the conspiracy and of the certainty that John Hopetown, alias John Hartpool is none other than Brinsley Congreve?"

"John Hartpool?" queried Frank, still more bewildered.

"Ay, I must tell you something, Frank, that you don't yet know. After the suicide of the supposed Brinsley Congreve, Charles Ruhl took home a friend whom he called John Hartpool. Both Nell and Amy were struck by the appearance of this man. He stayed some days in the house. They therefore had plenty of opportunity of marking his manner and becoming accustomed to his face. Upon inquiry I learned that he was never seen there again and had gone abroad."

"I fail still to see the connection."

"Wait. I felt curious about this man, and from what I heard and learnt from very unexpected quarters I felt more curious about this person. I asked Amy if she could recognize him again. She was positive of it; she said, so, without telling her my intention, I took her into the park and strolled about until we came full upon your supposed cousin. The recognition was complete. I merely saluted and past on, and asked Amy if she knew the gentleman; she said 'Oh, yes, it is Mr. John Hartpool.'"

"Strange, very strange! Upon my word, Ned, you would make a splendid detective. I should never have thought of that."

"I did still more, Frank; I did exactly the same with Nell. She recognized him too. There was no hesitation, no doubt. John Hartpool she said, and I was convinced."

"And what are you going to do now?"

"I am going to London to get the dead man's clothes."

"But where are they?"

"Looked up in Charles Ruhl's strong-box at Kennington."

"Ned," said Frank, his colour rising with his temper, "by Heaven, this infamous fraud shall be exposed, and as to Congreve, the impostor, I will hunt him down. They intended showing me no mercy, I will show them none. I think I shall soon get better after this, and yet," he added, regretfully, "had Congreve come to me I would have made good the forgetfulness of his relations in providing nothing for him. It is too late now."

"Keep yourself quiet, Frank, until you hear from me. Unless I am very much mistaken I shall find undeniable proof of all that I have suspected."

"And may you prove too that it has not been murder," said Frank, as he shook hands with Edward. "Heaven bless you, old fellow. I did not

think when I found so sweet a wife that I should find a generous and brave-hearted brother."

"Who is working for a sweet sister and a generous, honourable young brother, for whom I would risk my life."

And so for a time they parted.

The journey from Craythorpe to London was by no means so slow as the journey down. He had but little time to spare if he wished to be in possession of the documentary evidence upon which he hoped to convict Charles Ruhl at the examination.

Edward Temple went home to the dull-looking house at Kennington, and, to his astonishment, found Amy there. She had been sent up by Mrs. Temple, who required some of her personal effects to be sent down to Sydenham.

Amy had changed terribly. Her large eyes looked larger than ever, her face was deadly pale and pinched—hers in fact was the look and expression of one who had suffered the most excruciating mental torture, and Edward involuntarily divined the cause.

There was a curious smell of burnt paper pervading the room; Edward looked for the cause and found it in the grate—a heap of charred paper filled the fireplace, and in the fender were the portions of the cover of a diary which had been torn piecemeal.

"Amy," said Edward, very gravely, "you have done well in destroying that thing. Its publicity would have brought you into this terrible affair, and you would have been the means of destroying the man you love."

"Oh, Edward! go on, poor Charles!" cried Amy, with such a heart-wrung wail that her brother's cheeks blanched. Then her old spirit rose, her eyes flashed, and she outlived Edward by the arm. "Tell me," she said, with the old, old look upon her startled face, "you have seen it, you have put him in prison. Oh, Edward, Heaven forgive you!"

"Amy, what are you saying? This is madness of yours. Get what you want and let me take you back to Sydenham."

"No, Edward, I will not go back to-night."

And her mother, knowing by this time the danger of opposing this turbulent temper, turned sadly away.

But he was not turned from his purpose. There was a great wrong to be righted and he meant to right it.

Early the following morning he appeared before a magistrate and asked that a constable should accompany him, with a warrant to search Charles Ruhl's boxes, the prisoner now in custody, he explained, and then the application was granted at once.

He took the officer back with him, a man in plain clothes. Ruhl's boxes were searched. The coat made by Sailor and Co., of Ottawa, was found, and a pair of light trousers by Asquith, of Bombay. These Edward gave over to the officer.

"Take care of those," he said. "They will be wanted in evidence."

And while the officer was scanning the garments previous to folding them up Edward searched still deeper down in the box, and came across a packet of correspondence addressed to Mr. Hopetown. He knew the handwriting; it was that of the lost John Hopetown.

These he put in his own pocket, and then, showing the remainder of the contents of the box to the officer, they left the house together.

"There is no time to be lost," he said, hailing a hansom. "Call another cab for yourself; here is your fare. I must drive at once to the solicitors for the prosecution."

And with that he drove away.

It was late at night before that cabman was discharged. Edward went from place to place, from solicitor to counsel and from counsel to solicitor, until he exhausted himself and the cab horse too, and then he went home to write the particulars to Frank.

"I was right," he wrote. "I have found a letter addressed to your stepmother by poor John. It contains his last wishes, mentions property he has acquired since he left England, mentions his intention of seeking eternal rest, and he hoped that his weary heart suffering would plead for his forgiveness to both Heaven and man. John's coat and trousers are in my possession. Heavens! what an explosion or social earthquake this will be, and how little the world expects it."

He wrote a good deal more, which must not be detailed here, and then snatched a few hours' sleep, for on the morrow Charles Ruhl was to be examined on the charges of conspiracy and fraud at the Central Criminal Court.

Guilt or not Charles Ruhl presented a very bold front in the dock. He was calm and stolid as ever, grave and earnest, and had public opinion been his judge then he would have been acquitted before the evidence had been heard. That pale, handsome, straight-faced young man, with his fine figure and gentlemanly deportment guilty of felony. Impossible!

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Alas! the love of women! it is known
To be a lovely and a fearful thing. *Byron.*

WHEN the defendant's name, age and address had been taken down the counsel for the prosecution, Mr. Sergeant Valentine, adjourned the case in a way that, without going at once into details, hinted so strongly at such dark and fearful doings that the suspicions raised against Ruhl were worse in effect than the positive knowledge of the enormity of his crimes.

The learned pleader commenced by declaring his utter inability to go fully into the case to-day. Evidence of a terrible nature had suddenly come to light, bringing the blackest charges against the prisoner. Amongst them were those of conspiracy to defraud Francis Craythorpe, Hopetown, now defendant in the will case of "Hopetown versus Hopetown," which case was now pending; of robbing the unfortunate gentleman who committed suicide by throwing himself into the River Serpentine on such and such a date, and of wilfully and unlawfully concealing the suicide's identity with criminal intent to impose a stranger upon the Hopetowns as the lost heir.

As the learned sergeant proceeded Charles Ruhl changed colour visibly. He was startled and bewildered. The counsel's perfect knowledge of the terrible affair filled him with wonder and dread.

Sergeant Valentine then went on to say that he must crave for an adjournment, as the defendant's accomplice had already been served with a writ to appear before the Judge in Chambers to answer the charge of perjury, and he felt it his duty to wait until such time as he could bring them together on the criminal charge of fraud and conspiracy. He also prayed that bail would not be allowed.

The counsel for the defence then rose. He had not been informed of the magnitude of the case, he said. He was totally unprepared for these charges, but still felt confident that he could clear the defendant with little difficulty at the next hearing of the case, and trusted that bail would be accepted, as it would be impossible for justice to be done to his client were he not allowed perfectly free intercourse with him.

After some deliberation bail was accepted, two sureties in one thousand each, and Ruhl in one thousand, and the case was remanded for a week.

It was a heavy bail; heavy as it was had been accepted. Charles Ruhl, who had borne his first spell of imprisonment with his usual philosophical stolidity, dreaded a second turn. His heart wailed within him at the thought, and when he heard that bail was taken he staggered rather than walked from the court.

He remained with his friends and counsel but a very few minutes, getting away as unobserved as he could. He drove off in a hansom. His first desire was drink.

His mouth had hardened, and there was a dark inner light in his eyes; he looked at his hand, it was steady.

"Charles Ruhl is not beaten yet," he said, mentally, and with that curiously slow smile that never stayed a second after it was formed. "But I must find out who is against me—her brother or her husband!"

He glanced at his seared and scarred hand; a darker shade overspread his face, and lifted the glass to his lips with his left hand. He had driven to a house where he was unknown and ordered a bottle of champagne and the best cigar they could sell him, and over which he made a wry face, in spite of the cigar costing ninnepence.

There was no hurry, no restlessness. The hour of trial had come, and but for the slight effects of his late solitary confinement he would have been as calm, as strong-nerved and as phlegmatic as ever.

When he had finished the champagne Charles Ruhl returned to his cab and drove on to Kensington.

"This is no time to absent myself," he thought. "If Temple or his mother are there I must meet them. If the Evil One has to be faced, face him."

When he reached the dull house, so dreary to him now, to his astonishment he found Amy there. She had but just come in apparently. She met him in the hall, and with outstretched arms flew towards him.

"Oh, Charles! dear, dear Charles, I have been watching and waiting for you, and the time seemed so long."

Ruhl took her face in his hands and kissed her as he did in the old days—old—and yet his happiness, his love—born, nourished and blighted—his glimpse of wealth, all had happened in a little over a year.

"I wonder if she knows anything," he thought. Amy had pulled him into the parlour and forced him into a chair. Her very first words proved that she knew too well what had happened to him.

"Why did you not come on here when you left that dreadful place? I was there."

"You, Amy?" cried he, agast.

"Yes; I found it all out for myself. Oh, how I hated that Mr. Valentine. Why does he hate you so?"

"Hate me, my pet? He does not hate me; he never saw me before in my life."

"Then why did the horrid thing want you to be shut up again?"

"My child, he is paid to paint me as black as possible, to prove me guilty if possible."

"And can he? Oh, Charles! if he does! And he might! What would you do then? Do not stay—do not, Charles. The police have been here and searched your boxes, and they know everything. Fly at once; do, I pray you, dearest, dearest Charles; and, oh, think of me, of what I shall suffer if they put you away. I could not bear it, and I could not part from you for ever. Oh, dearest Charles, leave the country and take me with you."

"What?"

Ruhl leapt up with something of horror and amazement on his face.

"Charles, Charles, I love you. I have always loved you before you began to love Ellen!"

"Amy, silence!" he said, sternly.

She shrank from him as if he had been an ogre, white and trembling and sick at heart. She crouched back from him, startled, heart-stricken, with numbness and staring eyes, so terrible had Charles Ruhl, the idol of her young life, changed to her.

"Good Heaven, Amy!" he cried, altering his tone and softening in manner. "can I believe my senses? Oh, my poor child, you do not know what you say. Love me? I, who will perhaps be a hunted felon? Amy, I will speak to you as I would a woman. Think of your sister and your mother. Surely you must know all the dark and terrible game I have played."

"For Ellen's sake. It was daring and brave!" cried Amy, rallying. "You only schemed and planned and worked after all, many do the same and succeed; but the law does not call it fraud or conspiracy in their case."

"Amy, would you shield me? I had hoped that you at least would not have known of this. I have been wrong. Heaven knows how wrong, how sinful, and all through my selfish ambition. I used to dream of the time to come when I should have completed my scheme, when I should have bravely piloted my ship home, no one suspecting me, no one knowing me as anything but what I seemed. But the whole course has been beset with unseen dangers, my ship is wrecked at the very moment I felt safe in the calm that surrounded us. I have lost. I must suffer, but, my darling child, I will not add that sin to the many already to be answered for, the sin of blighting your young life and embittering your existence, for in these days, Amy, there is no safe refuge from the law but—death."

"And you, Charles; what will you do?"

"Surrender to my bail—stand my trial in spite of the whole world—in the face of everything, and of every danger. Amy, this is the last time we may meet again in this world; of the next I can say nothing. Amy, you must forget me—you must indeed. Double villain should I be were I to take advantage of your childish infatuation for my worthless self. Think of what I have said and calm yourself. In one moment I will go to the room that was once mine, though there is little there that can be of use to me. Think no more of this unwise attachment. The secret shall rest and die between us."

He kissed her in his gentle, brotherly way and left the room.

During his absence Amy sat like a lifeless figure. But he was not gone long; there was nothing much left him there beyond what he could put in a hand bag.

After a few moments' and dwelling upon the past gone for ever from him, to make nothing but a memory, he took a last lingering glance round the room as if wishing to remember every object in it, and then he stole downstairs and opened the parlour door.

"Amy, good-bye!"

The cry that answered him wrung his heart. The hour of trial had come! Now was to be seen how Charles Ruhl could play the man. Could he indeed tear himself away from this child who had been so dear to him—dear as a potted sister, and now the last and only one left in the dull-looking house to bid him farewell, to bestow upon him one thought, a word of mercy and kindness?

A moment's terrible temptation to defy the world, to leave it and seek a quiet home in some distant land with her for his child love seized him. But in a moment it was over.

"No," he said, mentally. "It would be the act of a craven." And then he drew Amy to his heart.

"Amy, my darling, my sweet little sister, you are the only one who has come to me, who will forgive me. Heaven bless you! Good-bye, darling!"

"We shall meet again, Charles."

"We must not, Amy; we dare not. Good-bye."

Think of me only as the Charles of the bygone days, when my name was spoken with pleasure in the house. Think of me in association with those days only, Amy, and let this dreadful present be forgotten."

The struggle had come. He stifled down his emotion and tore himself away. Snatching up his handbag, he fled from the house. The clang of the outer door drowned the cry that arose within that now silent room, its solitary occupant now lying partly on her side, partly face downwards, senseless and still.

Edward Temple, returning almost directly after Charles Ruhl had gone, found her in this condition. He learnt from the servant who had been, and a frown settled upon his brow.

"It will be the last time he comes here," he said, inwardly, and lifting Amy from the floor he carried her to the bedroom above.

He was silent and gentle towards her when she recovered. No allusion was made to Ruhl. Edward hired a thoroughbred at an adjacent livery stables and drove her back to Sydenham. Mrs. Temple, taking the cue from Edward, made no inquiries and no comments.

Amy was in a sad state, desponding, restless, feverish, and without any appetite; her only longing was for solitude, which was not permitted. The result of this was strong symptoms of a lasting illness.

Mrs. Temple looked grave and sighed and prophesied. Edward said things looked bad, and took certain measures to better them.

He wrote to Ellen and told her to let the matter before Frank. The result was just what Edward expected. Frank sent back word through Ellen that Amy was to be sent at once to Craythorpe, where everything would be done to make her forget this miserable attachment.

"The park, the woods, the picture gallery, a pony and a little boat for the lake," wrote Ellen, "will find her plenty of employment, and she will gladly forget him and his miserable sinfulness. When things are more settled in London mamma could run down here. At present, dearest, dreadful business will occupy all of us besides a whole box of lawyers."

So Amy was despatched to Craythorpe. But neither the park nor the park, picture gallery, pony or boat for the lake could wean her from her heart-ache.

She fretted inwardly, she was breaking through the strength of her hardy physique, she was suffering a heavy mental wear and tear that would not last, and in a few days after her arrival at Craythorpe she broke down and was put to bed in a raging fever. Before the night was out she became delirious and the next day was in a dangerous and critical state.

So that love was strongest after all. Craythorpe with its park, woods, pictures, horses, boats, birds, flowers and fishes, with its staff of servants and obsequious rustics, was nothing weighed in the balance against the love of erring, outcast Ruhl.

In the midst of this Frank, who was still delicate, would be compelled to appear in London when the will case was heard.

He had already been examined by two eminent physicians who would be called upon to give evidence as to his sanity.

That had been a trying moment for Frank, but he bore it bravely, and even resisted the temptation to ask them their opinion. That could be given in court. He could wait till then.

This first hearing of the application was generally supposed to be nothing more than mere preliminary. The Widow Hopetown expected that this hearing of the case would at least throw the property into Chancery until decided by the judge, in which case Frank would not be able to meddle any farther with the money.

Marion Hopetown was in attendance, so were Frank and Edward Temple. When the case was called there was some excitement in court, the name Ruhl in connection with the Hopetowns had lent an interest to the case not entirely its own.

The plaintiff's case was gone into at some length. The late Ferdinand Hopetown's will was carefully gone into to show that his son, Francis Craythorpe, had wilfully and knowingly broken the conditions of that will, and thereby forfeited the property which was to have been his on fulfilling the conditions stated in the will.

"What proof have you that defendant broke the conditions of the will?" asked the judge.

"He has acknowledged his wife, my lord. The marriage took place while he was still a minor, and there was an evident intent to defraud the executors."

"Have you proof of that?"

"The marriage was kept secret even from the lady's family, and at the risk of her good name."

"That does not prove that the marriage was kept secret for no other purpose than to defraud the executors."



[A WELCOME HOME.]

The counsel, slightly annoyed at being thus quietly checked in his ardour, went on to say that the gravity of the case necessitated an adjournment but that he begged his lordship would make an order staying the defendant making further use of the property until judgment had been given.

Then rose the counsel for the defendant. He was a man of some eminence, with a refined humour and deep, telling pathos that both charmed and moved his hearers in spite of themselves.

"But it is there," interrupted the judge. "If that clause is not valid the will is not valid."

"My lord, I must oppose that application and also an adjournment until such evidence as I have in court is heard, and I have that here which will probably throw quite another light on the matter, and probably end the case at once. There is no reason to believe that the testator ever meant that clause to be rigorously enforced."

"My Lord, I do not throw a doubt on its validity. I wish simply to show that such a clause may have been inserted merely to restrain the young heir from making a mé-alliance, and in this case the defendant has married a lady of gentle blood, educated and refined, and whose brother is a man of property."

"Does it say that in the will?" asked the judge, quickly.

"These may not be the exact words, my lord; but such a construction might be put upon it, seeing that after the will was made, and just before testator's death, he left in trust with his executor, an old and valued friend, a sealed packet, sealed and signed in the presence of witnesses, and bearing these instructions:

"To be opened should my son, Francis Craythorpe, be in trouble during his minority?"

"Have you that sealed packet?"

"It is here, my lord. The executor has it. He is in court. It has not been opened yet. If your lordship will order it to be read—"

"Let me see it."

There was some excitement in court now as a gentleman stepped forward, and the sealed packet was handed to the judge, who, after scanning the exterior, asked:

"Are the witnesses whose signatures this bears in court?"

"They are, my lord."

"Let them be called."

Mrs. Hopetown looked at her son aghast. She had forgotten this sealed packet until now the memory of it made her tremble. Ferdinand Hopetown would never have deposited such a thing in the hands of Frank's friends but for some strong and terrible motive.

Marcus felt an ominous dread come upon him, and he wished that these proceedings had never been instituted.

"My lord," said Mrs. Hopetown's counsel, "I think I should not be out of order in calling my clients and examining them upon their knowledge of the existence of this sealed packet before the counsel for the defendant goes any farther into the question."

"Certainly there is no reason why you should not."

And then Mrs. Hopetown was called. Had she heard what the counsel for the defendant had stated concerning a sealed packet? Yes, she had. Did she remember that packet when she instituted the suit? No. Had she any knowledge of it or of what it contained? Oh, no.

The counsel hesitated. He wanted to throw a doubt upon it, and was therefore afraid of going too far with this witness. The counsel for the defendant did not intend the matter to rest there.

"You say," he asked, quite prepared for a killing cross-examination, "you did not remember the packet?"

"No, I did not."

"And have no knowledge of its contents?"

"None."

"Now then; on your oath did you not know that such a packet did exist?"

"I believed there was something of the sort."

"I ask you, on your oath did you not know that your late husband, the testator, had placed a sealed packet in the hands of his friend, the gentleman before mentioned?"

"Yes."

"That will do."

Marcus was examined and cross-examined in the same way, and it was elicited from him that he too knew that a sealed packet had been given by his stepfather to the executor.

"Now, my lord," said the triumphant counsel, "I think I can and shall prove that there has been considerable animus shown on the part of the prosecution. Not only have the plaintiffs commenced this suit to grasp his fortune, they have gone farther, a commission de lunatic inquiring having been instituted by them. I think, my lord, that there's considerable animus and an unscrupulousness too in trying to obtain his property. I will now proceed, my lord, to call the witnesses to prove their signatures."

The witnesses were sworn, and examined in turn. They swore to the signatures being theirs, and also that they had attested them in the presence of the testator and others.

The sealed packet was then handed to the counsel to read.

There was no necessity for the usher to call silence. Intense interest was awakened in every breast, all eyes were for a moment turned towards pale and delicate Francis Hopetown, who had the sympathy of every one in court; and then in a clear voice, and with a splendid delivery, the counsel read out the contents of the sealed packet.

"I, Ferdinand Gilbert Hopetown, of Carisford Grange, Devon, and Hyde Park Gardens, London, being of sound mind, do hereby revoke the clause in my will whereby my son is disinherited in the event of his marrying during his minority, provided that said Francis Craythorpe shall have married a lady of gentle culture and educated sufficiently to be his companion in the society to which he belongs."

"Feeling acutely the injudiciousness of the aforesaid clause in my will, knowing that it may put strong temptations in the way of others to become possessed of his property, I do hereby solemnly request that the following conditions be carried out in every detail for the protection and safety of my dear son, the said Francis Craythorpe:

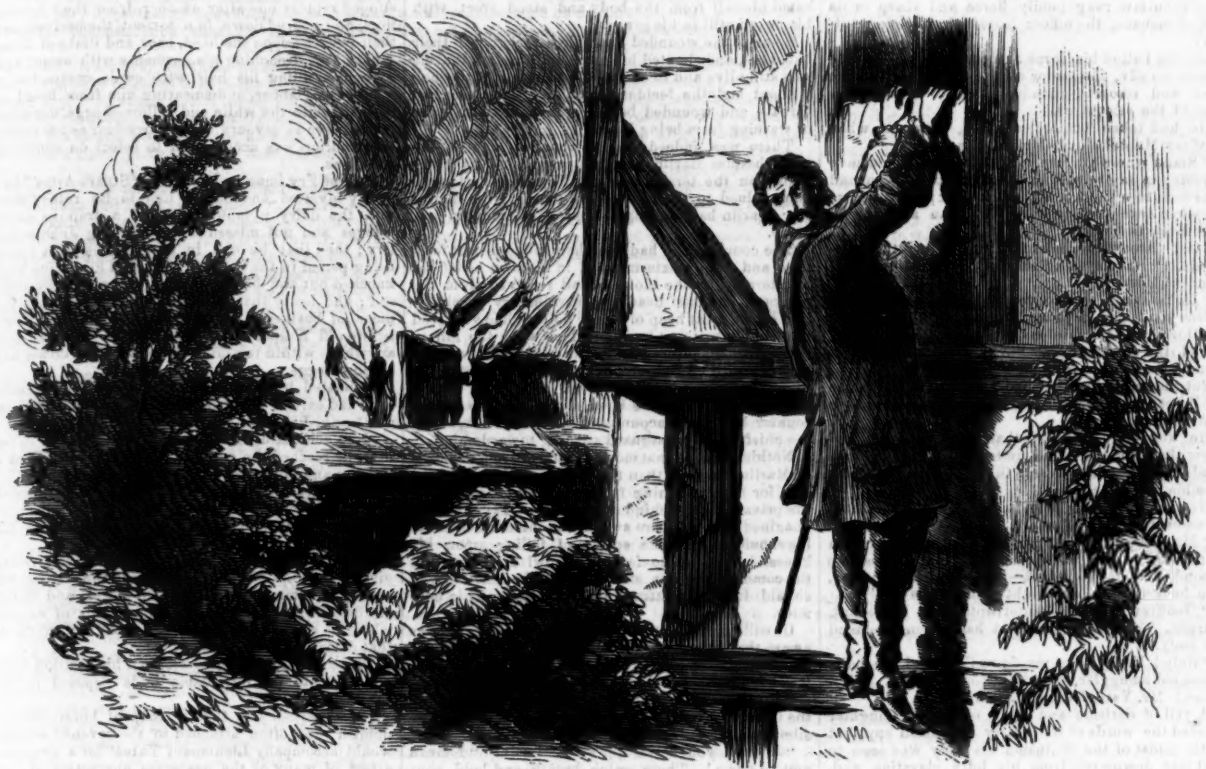
"That, provided my wife or my stepson, Marcus Stebberton, or both, in or not in conjunction with other persons, should attempt to lay claim to my son's, the aforesaid Francis Craythorpe's, property, by forcing him into danger or difficulties, or seeking to cause him danger or difficulties, I do annul and declare void the clause in my will bequeathing to my wife, the said Charlotte Ann, the legacy detailed in my will of May 14th, 1866, and in lieu thereof I do devise and bequeath unto her for her sole use and benefit an annuity of fifteen hundred pounds, chargeable on the rents of my estate Carisford, Devon. I also devise and bequeath unto my wife, the said Charlotte Ann, the use of my residence in Hyde Park Gardens during the time of her natural life. And provided that my stepson, the said Marcus Stebberton, in conjunction with other persons, or separately, as aforesaid, should attempt to lay claim to my son's, the aforesaid Francis Craythorpe's, property, or force him into danger or difficulties, or seek to cause him danger or difficulties, I do revoke all legacies bequeathed to him in my will of May 14th, 1866."

Then followed date and signature.

"There, my lord," cried the exultant counsel, with a glowing face; "it is human nature's weakness to gloat over victory. I think that closes the case."

A murmur went round the court. Mrs. Hopetown sat speechless and cold as if stricken with a blight.

(To be continued.)



[MARLIN'S FLIGHT.]

MARLIN MARDUKE.

CHAPTER XI.

I'm armed with more than complete steel,
The justice of my quarrel.

THE smuggler chief and his evil son, Captain Herod, had advanced near to the doomed man, and their faces as well as forms were plainly visible to Elena and the landlord.

"This man, my lads," said Geoffrey, in a loud, distinct tone, "is well known to you all. Obel Ling is the spy and traitor that has so long baffled our search and suspicion. I learned yesterday that he had informed the commandant of the coastguard of many things of which our bond of union declare the betrayers to be punishable with death. It was Obel Ling who instigated Commandant Marlin to attempt the arrest of two of our friends. The proofs are in my hands. It is not necessary to read them—"

"Not at all," roared several of the mob, whose appetite for blood was aroused to fury. "Hang him!"

Here the culprit succeeded in forcing the gag from his jaws, and cried out:

"A fair trial! I demand a fair trial. Geoffrey Marduke hates me because I know too much of his early life!"

Captain Herod here dealt him a savage blow in the face, and but for the post that was to serve as his gallows the man would have fallen.

"If I could live to pay back the blow, Herod Marduke, I would die content," exclaimed Ling.

Captain Herod drew his dagger and was about to plunge it to the hilt into the throat of Obel Ling when Geoffrey Marduke turned aside the descending blow with a stroke of his club, saying:

"You are not his executioner. He is to be hanged—not stabbed."

"Make him confess!" cried a voice of some personal foe of the condemned, and the cry was repeated by many others.

"Who cares a straw for his confession?" yelled others, impatient to see foul murder done upon him.

The shouts of the men, hoarse, gruff and brutal, the yells and screams of the women, of whom great numbers had gathered—wives and daughters of smugglers, desperadoes, thieves and footpads—screams shrill and demoniac, shrieks of wild and fiendish laughter, oaths, threats, howls, the glare and brandishing of many torches, the roar and crackling of distant flames—all made a fearful confusion to ear and eye.

Yet more fearful than all were the hideous, crime-

stained, crime-distorted, crime-painted faces of the many-headed mob, whirling, dancing, leaping around the doomed spy.

Many of these faces were not unknown to Elena, for she had dwelt from her childhood in Anglesey, yet she could not recall the time when she had seen so many evil-looking ones at a single glance.

Obel Ling, having freed one arm from the cords that bound him, resisted with the energy of despair the efforts made to gag him, filling the air with his screams for mercy and denunciations of Geoffrey Marduke.

"Up with him!" cried the smugglerchief.

And a score of men pulling at one end of the stout rope quickly elevated the victim at the other.

"The coast-guard!" shouted some on the edge of the mob.

And the cry was instantly taken up:

"Look out!"

It was the cry of warning which told the smugglers of the near approach of their enemies of the revenue service.

"Make fast that rope around the post!" shouted Geoffrey Marduke. "Let the traitor that brought the guard upon us hang! Rally, and shout for the Prince of Orange!"

It was a shrewd device on the part of Geoffrey Marduke to make this outbreak appear as a piece of the great revolution just inaugurated in the troubled realm.

It was a fine opportunity to gratify private hate and accomplish daring plots under the colour of aiding the dominant party.

Therefore, with an audacity that even he would scarcely have dared to use under other circumstances, he shouted, lustily:

"Rally, and shout for the Prince of Orange!"

The straggling smuggler remained swinging in the air, for Geoffrey's hasty commands were instantly obeyed by those having the rope in their hands. The cord had slipped from the neck to the chin of the struggling man; he had one arm free, had reached up and clutched the cord above his head with that hand, and, being an athletic knave, managed to prevent immediate strangulation.

"Rally," thundered Captain Herod, as he caught sight of a strong force of the coast-guard, numbering fully thirty well-armed men, rapidly coming up the narrow street that led to the inn.

The mob nearest to their compact and formidable array fell back in great haste and disorder, for this was recognized as the choice reserve force of the commandant, and their discipline was equal to that of the best troops of the line.

This reinforcement which was arriving so tardily came on briskly at a double-quick, with the pikes at charge, while the rattle and clash of the cutlasses and musketoon warned the mob that perhaps a more serious struggle than that of the public room was at hand.

Geoffrey and his evil son, however, speedily rallied their immediate followers at the base of the sign-post, and presented a firm front as the space between them and the coast-guard became clear.

Each of these Mardukes was a commander of a schooner of his own, and their united crews originally numbered over fifty men. Several had fallen or been disabled in the sharp conflict in the public room, however; but as the desperadoes of the shore and the crews of other smuggling craft, large and small, regarded Geoffrey Marduke as their chief, and rallied promptly at his call, the force under his command was swelled to the formidable number of nearly two hundred able-bodied and well-armed men, accustomed to fierce hand-to-hand conflicts with the coast-guard. The number of loose ruffians and women almost as dangerous to encounter as their husbands, fathers or brothers, ready to aid the organized smuggler bands, were fully five hundred—the affray at the inn having gathered them from the immediate vicinity.

Others were fast trooping in from the surrounding country, and distant shouts upon the bay told that those who had remained aboard the many craft there anchored were manning their boats to take part in what was transpiring ashore.

The approaching force of the coast-guard should have been at the inn more than an hour earlier, such having been the commands of Marlin Marduke, whose rare and cautious foresight had expected a struggle of unusual severity.

They had been delayed, however, by several opposing circumstances, and as their leader marked the large force before the great tavern, the well-known headquarters of all the desperadoes of the place, and saw the body of a man dangling in the air, apparently by the neck, a chill of dread ran through his heart lest his chief had been overpowered and slain.

"Hold!" thundered Geoffrey Marduke, as soon as the opposite party arrived within hearing. "Hold, or we fire on you!"

A careless hand had dropped a torch in an old and isolated stable near the inn, and as this was now in full blaze the excited scene was almost as plainly visible as by the light of day.

The leader of the coast-guard was a bold man, as were all those who had been selected by the com-

mandant to serve near him, but as the harsh voice of the outlaw rang loudly, fierce and sharp in its tone of menace, the officer halted his force immediately.

Having halted his force and commanded them to remain steady, the leader of the coastguard, a man stern and resolute, advanced boldly towards the front of the smugglers.

He had taken but a few steps, however, when Geoffrey Marduke bade him halt, saying:

"Stand where you are, Mr. Yates, and if you have anything to say to us speak fast. I bid you and your men to withdraw without farther parley, for we have lost several of our friends in an alley with your late commandant."

"Our late commandant!" interrupted the lieutenant. "Has anything serious happened to Commandant Marduke?"

"He is dead; and so you and all of you will be unless you depart in peace," replied Geoffrey.

"Down with the minions of James the Second!" roared the furious mob. "No quarter for any of them. Hurrah for William of Orange!"

But the smuggler chief had no desire to drive the small yet formidable force of the revenue service to destruction.

He was more prudent than his followers, and knew that the thirty veterans who faced his mob would fight fiercely to sell their lives as dearly as possible.

He turned to his friends, and enforced instant silence with a single gesture.

"Mr. Yates," he continued, "you and your men were enlisted into the service of King James the Second. He has abdicated—there is no longer king. You have now no legal right to molest us—"

"Geoffrey Marduke," interrupted the lieutenant, sharply, "if the commandant has fallen, demand this body."

"Help! Mercy! Cut me down!" yelled the half-strangled smuggler, dangling from the sign. "Mr. Yates! Mr. Yates! cut me down!"

A yell of derision and peals of savage laughter greeted the words of the nearly exhausted spy, but in the midst of the confusion his body was seen to dart feet downward from his lofty elevation, and, half-turning over as it fell, disappeared amid the throng around the base of the sign-post.

Some one had cut the fastenings of the rope. Who that one was, was quickly discovered, for a well-known voice, instantly after the fall of the spy, shouted:

"Coasters, charge! Forward, coasters, forward!" "Fiends alive!" muttered Geoffrey Marduke, as he heard the voice and saw his followers shrinking in sudden confusion upon him, their faces towards the sign-post. "It is Marlin Marduke himself! Bally, friends!"

To explain these words and the sudden descent of the suspended man, we must return to the public-room, in which we left Marlin Marduke apparently dead.

When Geoffrey ordered the spy to be brought forth and hanged every person in the room able to leave it rushed out to be a spectator of the execution, so that when the commandant regained his consciousness, which he soon did, there was no one present to oppose his escape.

The ball fired by Kaspar Rheinland had been aimed at the heart of the young officer, for the racially landlord meant nothing less than to kill. His aim was deadly, but fortunately for Marlin the ball struck the iron hilt of a dagger beneath his vest, and glancing there inflicted only a severe flesh wound, running around the ribs and lacerating the chest, but not penetrating to any vital organ.

The wound bled for a moment profusely, and the force of the concussion immediately over the heart instantly stunned and prostrated the commandant. Thus for several minutes he lay as if dead. But strength and vitality soon came back to him, fortunately when no one of his enemies able to oppose his escape remained to observe him.

At first, on regaining his senses, he raised himself upon his elbow and stared about him.

The room was in fearful disorder from broken and overturned furniture, while here and there lay bodies of men so silent and motionless that Marlin knew at a glance they were dead. Several wounded men were groaning and tossing their bodies about in pain, furiously venting imprecation upon their friends who had deserted them to witness the hanging of the spy.

When the rush was made to witness the execution every door and window was thrown wide open by those whose savage eagerness led them to make haste to be at the expected death, so that the large room had been quickly freed from its uninjured occupants, and also from the dense mass of smoke which had for a time made all objects nearly unrecognizable.

Perceiving, with a sad heart, that his trusty and

faithful lieutenant was dead, Marlin carefully extricated himself from the body and stood erect, with his sword still in his grasp.

Some of the wounded smugglers recognized their hated foe, and shouted his name and the fact that he was still alive and in arms. But the roar of the mob without and the feebleness of their own parched throats and wounded bodies prevented those cries of warning from being heard.

There was, indeed, one unwounded man in the room besides Marlin, but that man being no other than the terrified courier Fry, and his tongue being glued to the roof of his mouth with mortal fear, Marlin had nothing to apprehend from his presence.

The courier, who had been half killed in fact for a time, and wholly exterminated in his own belief for all eternity, by the blow he had received from the deameter, and his headlong, involuntary precipitation into a great heap of empty bottles, had ventured to raise his battered head and face when the lull in the apartment informed him that he might venture to do so with no risk of having his skull shattered by random blows of lead or steel.

But as he raised his head above the top of the counter his eyes encountered the warlike figure of the chief of the coastguard striding towards him.

Nothing was at that moment farther from the mind of Marlin Marduke than the existence of Jehosaphat Fry, for he was aiming to escape from the room by the private door behind the bar, but Fry at once imagined that the bare sword was intended to smite his shoulders upon the spot, and falling upon his knees, he set up so fearful a howl of terror that the commandant was startled; but the horrible yell should instantly attract the attention of his enemies.

Unwilling to permit the fellow to die, for he was aware that Fry was a valuable man, and a great admirer of Elton Rheinland, Marlin saw that one way by which this hideous howling could be checked, and therefore seized Fry's long, ornate life-thrust in the iron grasp of his left hand, and choked him into silence in the twinkling of an eye.

"Silence you coward," said Marlin. "I mean you no harm! There, catch breath and hold your tongue."

He then released him and hurried on towards the shattered door.

But Jehosaphat Fry did not hold his tongue, but held fast to the sleeve of the commandant.

"Major-General!" he cried, "you can't get out that way! The door at the head of the stairs is locked and bolted! Captain Herod tried it when the two travellers fled up! Swords and spears! What a fighter that white-haired gentleman is, to be sure! Get out by that green door, general-major! It opens into the buttery—your greatness may leap thence from the window—and—"

"And what?" asked the commandant, as Fry hesitated.

"And be caught, for I heard Sir Geoffrey order guards to be placed everywhere."

"No matter. At least I will make an attempt to escape," replied Marlin, hesitating to try the door designated by the courier.

It opened readily, and he entered. The single window was very high from the floor, and only visible from the glare of the torches on the burning stable without.

Marlin Marduke, who was as agile as a panther, surveyed the lofty aperture for an instant, and then leaping up grasped the edge of the sill, drew his body up, and gazed forth.

Below the window was a small garden, surrounded by a very tall fence built of boards, and Marlin Marduke, resolute to dare everything, forced his way through the aperture and dropped lightly upon the soft mould of the garden below.

At this instant some smuggler in the agony of his wounds groaned dismally, and, rolling against the door of the buttery, closed it, shutting in Fry, who had followed the commandant.

His nerves were in a fearful state of flutter, and he at once imagined that no less a person than Geoffrey Marduke himself had detected him in the act of aiding in the flight of the man most feared and detested by the smugglers.

He could not rival the mighty leap of Marlin Marduke, but he saw the faint outlines of rows of shelves from floor to ceiling, on which the dairymaids ranged their pans of milk and cream.

Up these shelves he scrambled as if up a ladder, and as he reached the topmost one it toppled over with him, thus precipitating him, some twenty pans of milk, cream and green cheese, a basket of eggs, and many other articles, all in a clash, a crash, a clatter to the floor.

Before the luckless courier could scramble to his feet or call out for deliverance from this disaster, other shelves heavily laden with great pans of milk, butter,

jams and jellies, jarred by the fall in their midst slipped rapidly one after another from their fastenings, and poured down in a torrent themselves and their burdens upon the head, back and limbs of Jehosaphat Fry, drenching his garments with sweet and sour milk, filling his hair with curds, cream, butter and bonny-clabber, and smearing him from beard to toe-nails with the white and yellow of eggs, not all of which were as savoury in taste or odour as our miserable courier was accustomed to select on convivial occasions.

At first Fry imagined that the "Stuart Arms" had bodily inverted and buried him in its ruins; then that the dairy nymphs had laid a trap to catch thieves and not missed it in catching Jehosaphat Fry; then that he was in the agonies of a rogue being pelted in the pillory; then that his brains were knocked out and being trodden under foot by himself; and lastly that he would do "a very healthy piece of business" by getting out of the buttery before old Kaspar Rheinland should discover him anywhere within ten miles of the wreck of cream and crush of eggs.

Animated by this thought he cleared his mouth, eyes and ears of their last and various contents, and essayed another scramble for the window.

More successful in this second attempt than in the first, he reached the window, springing through it at a venture and landed in a heap upon the ground.

In the meantime the commandant had boldly scaled the high fence and leaped into an alley, where he passed to reconnoitre the surroundings before the time.

It was at that moment that the cry was raised giving warning of the approach of the coastguard under the command of Lieutenant Yates, and Marlin Marduke listened eagerly for the sounds of conflict which he expected would ensue upon the arrival of that daring subordinate.

The commandant, however, from his position could not estimate the formidable odds opposed to the coastguard.

He expected, too, that a troop of horse, fifty in number, and often attached to the revenue service, would accompany Lieutenant Yates for a sweeping arrest of many of the desperate characters of Anglesey had been resolved upon by the Admiralty, and the conduct of the enterprise had been entrusted to him.

He did not know that by the cunning of Geoffrey Marduke the troop of horse had been deceived and called off far from Anglesey, the smuggler chief having been well informed of all that was meditated against him and his friends.

Therefore, when the command of Lieutenant Yates had halted, and as that officer and Geoffrey engaged in conversation, of which, however, Marlin could hear nothing, he being in the rear of the smugglers, he resolved to attempt the rescue of Obel Ling, and then the arrest of Geoffrey and all the chiefs of the outlaws.

He had no respect for the man Obel Ling. On the contrary, he detested him, for he knew him to be base, vile and treacherous. Had he also known that the insolent fellow had secretly aspired to win the love of the maiden for whom he was ever willing to devote his life, it is not probable that the commandant would have bestowed as much as a pitying thought upon the half-stuffed man whose struggling form he saw dangling and spinning many feet above the heads of the deriding mob clustered at the base of the sign-post.

Had he ever suspected that his betrothed had often shrunk in terror from the bold and impudent glare of Obel Ling's evil eyes as he leered insolently upon her, Marlin Marduke would have left him gladly to his merited doom.

Obel Ling he only knew as a dark and dangerous man, who had been for years associated with the smugglers of Anglesey; as a man who was extremely unpopular with all, and feared by all; as a man whose hand report, no doubt correctly, said was red with the blood of half a score of men; as a man disliked, and yet for some potent and secret reason countenanced by Geoffrey Marduke; as a man whose speech at times betrayed his former intimate acquaintance with men of high rank, whether that intimacy sprang from his rights as their equal or his claims as their instrument; as a man who was learned in all the accomplishments of the age, in language and in science; as a dissipated, reckless ruffian, who would be ruffian or gentleman in his bearing as it suited him.

More than this, and fortunately for Obel Ling, as he hung over the grave his enemies intended to dig at the base of his gibbet, the commandant knew him as a man who, having received gold and promise of pardon for his misdeeds, from the government, had revealed to the revenue board many of the darkest and most criminal deeds of the outlaws of land and sea.

The evidence of the fellow was needed, or rather would be very important in convicting those whom it was the commandant's intention to arrest that night.

Actuated, therefore, by these powerful motives, Marlin Marduke resolved to save the life of the suspended spy, even at the risk of losing his own.

Moving cautiously and yet rapidly, and careful to move in the shade and darkness, he soon gained a position not many yards from the base of the sign-post.

All eyes at that moment were turned upon Geoffrey Marduke and Lieutenant Yates. All ears were bent towards them. Seizing this opportunity to act in favour of Obel Ling, the daring commandant dived with immense bounds from his concealment across the space that separated him from the sign-post, dashed aside or down male and female obstacles, and in a moment, and before his intention was suspected, before his person was recognized, severed the rope whose fastenings held the spy in the air.

The blow was struck in the very nick of time for Obel Ling, for the strength of the man had become exhausted, his benumbed muscles in the arm that had so long sustained the entire weight of his heavy body had grown feeble, his fingers had fallen from the grasp they had taken on the cord above his head, the whole burden of his frame was settling upon the back of his neck and upon his chin, around which the noose had slipped, when the keen edge of the sword of the commandant let him descend from his perilous elevation like a plummet: let fall from the sky.

He came down upon the heads and shoulders of those below, and thus his fall did not harm him. A hasty and immediate scattering took place among the crowd into, or rather upon which he had fallen, and the commandant, with the amazing celerity which had made him the worst-dreaded foe of the mob, stooped over the half-stunned victim, and in a second had severed every cord that bound him.

Obel Ling was then upon his feet in a breath, and even as his daring rescuer uttered that cry of encouragement to the coastguard which informed Geoffrey Marduke and his startled followers that the man whom they had most cause to fear was still alive and battling against them in their very midst.

Obel Ling had been so far within the yawning jaws of death that he was in a fury of desperate rage against those who had placed him there or rejoiced in seeing him there. With a wild cry of wrath, almost maniacal, and his face bathed in the cold perspiration which springs clammy from the brows of men in instant peril of a horrible and infamous death, he wrenched a cutlass from the hand of a seaman near him as he sprang to his feet, and clove the man's head to the chin.

The shout of the commandant was recognized instantly by the coastguard as it was also by Geoffrey and his desperadoes, and the command to charge was fiercely repeated by Lieutenant Yates, and as fiercely answered by the thirty well-armed men at his back.

A man of extraordinary prowess like Marlin Marduke, whose very name was a terror to the boldest of the outlaws, aided by a powerful man like Obel Ling, who was inspired with the fury of a maniac, suddenly making a rear and unexpected attack, made their enemies fall back in haste, and seek safety in flight behind their two formidable leaders, Geoffrey and Harold.

In the midst of this confusion the thirty men of the coastguard sprang forward at a run, with their sharp pikes levelled at the throats and breasts of the seamen, who also rushed to meet the attack with gleaming cutlasses and cocked pistols.

"Oh, Heaven!" exclaimed Elena, as she gazed upon the scene. This is not an affray—it is a battle!

And with a prayer for the safety of her lover she covered her eyes with her hands as the report of firearms and the clash of steel fell sharply upon her ears.

(To be continued.)

DEATHS DURING THE DIFFERENT HOURS OF THE DAY.—Dr. Lawson has made several interesting observations regarding the number of deaths which occur during the different hours of the day. Following up the researches of Schöfner and others who had shown that the greatest number of deaths take place during the ante-meridian hours, Dr. Lawson has been able to determine more closely the time of the day when the greatest and least number of deaths occur. Supplementing the statistics of other institutions by those of the West Riding Asylum, he finds that deaths from chronic diseases are more numerous between the hours of eight and ten in the morning than any other time in the day, while they are fewest between the

hours of eight and ten in the evening. In the case of acute diseases, such as continued fever, pneumonia, &c., a different result has been obtained. Following up what had been pointed out by other authorities, Dr. Lawson shows that the largest number of deaths from this class of diseases take place either in the early morning, when the powers of life are at their lowest, or in the afternoon, when acute disease is most active. The occurrence of these definite daily variations in the hourly death-rate is shown in the case of chronic diseases to be dependent on recurring variations in the energies of organic life; and in the case of acute diseases the cause is ascribed either to the existence of a well-marked daily extreme of bodily depression, or to a daily maximum intensity of acute disease.

THE SWEET SISTERS OF INCHVARA: THE VAMPIRE OF THE GUILLAMORES.

CHAPTER XXXV.

AGES of time might have passed over that rigid figure lying in the cheerless chamber if, measured by the anguish of the still sentient mind. Through her closed eyelids she saw the white-blue of the lamplight as it shone steely on.

Sometimes a heavy wave of unconsciousness rolled over her, sometimes an agonized interval of mental activity occurred.

Then thoughts that were horrible enough to keep the fatal slumber at bay, in spite almost of nature's weakness, teemed in the whirling brain. Suspicions of monstrous perfidy, terrors that convulsed the slow-beating heart, and sent a thrill through the fast-petrifying muscles.

But at last a pang of mortal agony seized her, her eyes flew wide open, her hands tore wildly at her bosom, tears and drops of perspiration bedewed the pillow, her body quivered from head to foot as if with fierce ague.

It passed. She lay calm, sweet, but awful in her stony serenity. Her great glazed eyes rested on vacancy; her long black hair swathed the pillow and fell in heavy masses over the head of the bed; her small, bloodless hands were clasped upon her bosom; she had entered the death-trance.

The night went on. Suddenly, through the strange quiet, there came a ring at the deep-mouthed bell, a loud call for the concierge, loud knocking at the heavy door-panels, shouts, calls, but not a whisper in reply.

Then an urgent tap was sounded on the window of the sick chamber, and an imperative voice cried, in English:

"Ho, there! Who is within?"

No response came.

So, without undue pause, there was a crash, the crazy casement, two-leaved, after the French fashion, flew open, and a man sprang in.

He was covered with mud and dust, haggard, travel-stained, and stern of visage.

He looked at the figure on the bed with a fierce sort of anxiety, strode forward, saw the deathly visage, the folded hands, the something which said grimly, "this is no human sleep!" and he gazed with a wild, heart-struck look, while a groan burst from his lips.

Then he removed his hat, sank at the bedside, and buried his face in the long, soft hair.

Presently his eyes fell on a piece of crushed paper which lay on the bed.

He opened it, and read at the top of a page of close writing, these words:

"The confession of Christabel Snowe."

It fluttered from his hands; he tottered away from the breathless form which could sin no more, and, falling on his knees beside the window-curtain, which quivered in the night wind, he looked with burning eyes and despairing heart into the black heavens, with a question on his lips which he dared not ask.

And the night still deepened.

A vision roused Winstanley, for it was he, from his voiceless prayer; a small white form floating through the open casement from the outer gloom, and crossing the bare, waxed floor.

A spirit?

No; the feet of the dead make no sound; he could hear the soft pressure of those blue-veined, pearly feet upon the boards. He could see the drops of dew upon them; he could hear the swish of the thin white robe which had been trailed over a dusty road and dripping grass.

And the eyes of the vision were intently fixed and azure blue, and the lips of it were touched with carmine, and the hair of it was glistening like a golden nimbus in the pale lamplight, and its breath came and went slow and calm as the breathing of a child asleep.

She floated round the small bed which stood in the middle of the room: she stretched her hands out, her lips began to move voicelessly, her eyes turned blankly from side to side.

Three times she encircled the bed, then she stood still at the foot of it, and seemed to gaze on her who lay upon it.

Her lips moved again, an audible whisper came from them, a thrilling, rushing whisper that sounded through the silent room with startling distinctness:

"Vara!"

What? A quiver of life on the frozen face of the dead?

Winstanley rose to his feet, and, fascinated, approached to the very side of the strange visitor.

Again the deep, penetrating whisper:

"Vara!"

And now the dark, fixed eyeballs of the seeming dead rolled in their sockets, a shiver ran through the rigid limbs.

Winstanley gazed from one to the other, from the weird vision of somnambulism to the awful vision of death.

For the third time came that eager, thrilling whisper:

"Vara!"

And, as at the Divine command of long ago, when dead Lazarus uprose in his clinging cements, so half-rose the pale woman on the bed, an awful smile of joy transfiguring her lifeless countenance, an awful cry coming from her rigid lips:

"Aileen!"

The somnambulist, at that unearthly voice, started violently and gazed in a frenzied manner about her.

A great cry, a wild bound, a snatching of that half-raised figure on the bed, a convulsive grasp, breast to breast, lip to lip, arms locked as if they never would outlive on earth, and thus the "Sweet Sisters" met again.

They saw not the astonished young man who stood gazing at them, a thrill at his heart, a tear of admiration in his eyes. Why should they? They only saw each other, and in each rapturous gaze a love which had never diminished.

But too soon the fell mists from the other world closed around their victim again. The smile froze upon Vara's lip, the film veiled her fond eye, her clinging arms relaxed, she sank again into the dreadful sleep from which her sister's soul had dragged her for a brief season.

Aileen, with her arm still under Vara's head, watched her in amazement, calling, ever and anon, "My own! Vara, my sweet jewel, awake!" in the sweet and passionate language of her own land. But the head waxed heavier, the face more death-like. Then Aileen began to tremble, and as her eyes searched in vain for some restorative she saw for the first time that they were not alone.

"Lady," said Winstanley, recovering from the astonishment which had possessed him, "I fear we have come too late. See!"

He put in her hand the paper containing the "Confession." She gazed at it in stupefaction, and flung it down.

"What has she to do with Christabel Snowe?" cried she. "This is not Christabel Snowe; she is my sister, Vara Guillamore."

"She has been known during a long career of crime as Christabel Snowe," answered Winstanley, bitterly.

"No, no!" returned Aileen, firmly, "you are mistaken. My sister was true and noble when we were parted about five months ago. But let the point pass; she is sensible—go, please, for help; the house seems to be empty."

"Madam, have you glanced at the 'Confession'?"

In it she says she has destroyed herself—"

"What—poisoned? Oh, my darling, my darling! But I cannot believe that!"

Winstanley was already at the house door removing the heavy bolts when he heard the thunder of approaching wheels and a travelling chaise drew up before him.

The door of it was thrown open; several travellers descended in haste.

"Mrs. St. Columb's chateau?" shouted a voice.

"Good Heavens, Gilmore! You here? Come in—it is the place," responded Winstanley.

"What! Lord John? Then, thank Heaven, you have been with her—my sister?"

"Your sister? Christabel Snowe lies in that room dying of poison. Mrs. St. Columb is I know not where."

Guillamore reeled and caught at the arm of Sherrard for support. Shane was already at the chamber door. The fourth traveller was burrowing at the boot of the carriage for his medical case.

"Come on, count," cried Charley Sherrard, in a rousing voice; "it's not too late for you to bestir yourself, it seems."

They rushed into the deserted house.

Winstanley followed mechanically to see the sleep-walker clasped to the broad breast of the sea-captain, crimson, astounded, tearful, while Kenelm was bending distractedly over the woman he himself had loved and hated as Christabel Snowe, and crying in accents of agony:

"Vara! Vara, my sister! Am I too late, my white lily?"

"There, Charley—flie!" gasped Yellow-Hair, flying out of his grasp. "Hand me that big plaid—there's a dear! Why—is this my brother? Sir, I am Aileen; are you Kenelm?"

"By the Eternal! Guillamores; you've got back one of your sisters safe and sound, and that's a good omen!" cried Sherrard, with joy on every sun-kissed lineament of his rough face.

Kenelm looked wistfully at the sweet, upturned eyes a moment, drew her to his heart in a solemn embrace, and then they turned without a word to Vara's chill semblance. Yes, they had brought back the vagabond doctor, the "Count de St. Cyr," and he knew that this was the time to work for his life.

Looking as desperate as a man going to be hanged, he smelled the empty wine-glass, smelled the pale mouth of the sleeper, held the light close over her glazed eyes, felt her heart, suddenly saw a pool of water on the well-waxed floor beside the bed, knelt down, smelled, tasted it, traced it from a still damp furrow in the counterpane, rose up with a sparkle in his small, dull eyes, and blew his monstrous nose, as the elephant emits a snort of triumph from his trunk.

"She hasn't taken the whole dose," said he. "Leave the room, every one of you, and I'll try to save her yet."

They obeyed him eagerly, all but Aileen. She said, looking him in the eyes:

"It's not likely her own sister would leave her. Make me of use if you can, but here I remain."

CHAPTER XXXV.

It will be necessary to go back to the point at which we left Aileen and her would-be lord and master rapidly driving away from the steamer, in order to explain how she happened to fall in with her kinspeople and friends so opportunely.

Rochester had remotely driven back to the lonely inn, ten miles from Halifax, and reached it more dead than alive.

Then Aileen found that the whole journey had been a well-arranged ruse to get rid of Sherrard and Zolande. She was informed that her husband did not intend returning to England. When a certain letter arrived, which he expected by the next mail, he was going to buy some land in the backwoods of Nova Scotia, build a hunting-lodge, and live there, she rearing her family in aristocratic quiet and seclusion, he moose-hunting and bear-trapping. Rochester did not fail to inform her that she had saved him a good deal of trouble by herself choosing the land of their adoption, as he had been quite undecided where to go.

Aileen was in despair; but she vowed in her brave little heart that she would never submit to him—no, not if she had to die a hundred deaths.

Rochester's wound festered, and he became very ill. The valet took care of him and of the lady also. Aileen was as placable as a child. She pitied the worthless villain who held her in bondage, and told him so. Rochester grew so much worse after that that she tended him herself, much as she might nurse the wounded enemy picked up from the battlefield.

Ten days after the departure of her dear, deceived Captain Sherrard the English mail arrived, and the innkeeper, who had driven to town for the purpose, brought to Rochester the long-desired letter.

As he read it his face darkened. A demoniac scowl contracted his attenuated features; he fell back in a fit.

Aileen hastily summoned his valet, and then, with not a little feminine malice—she could not do it secretly—she picked up the English letter, saying: "If I am his wife I have a right to see his correspondence," and read it, the valet glaring at her, but only daring to glare.

It ran thus briefly:

"MY GOOD FRIEND ROCHESTER.—Our scheme is an utter failure; we fastened on the wrong people, and the estate is now being enjoyed by its rightful heirs. The British public is now in its turn down upon yours truly; have not discovered the tell-tale this time. I must fly, of course, into obscurity—hope 'La Croce' is available at the old stand. Sorry that your matrimonial venture turns out so badly—how you are to get rid of her I know not, unless 'by accident.' Yours, with very deep regrets,

"CHRISTABEL SNOWE."

Aileen's admiration for Rochester did not improve, you may be sure, upon reading this document, but she never mentioned it until he, the following day,

with penitential tears and sundry anathemas directed against the unknown Christabel Snowe, explained that it was written doubtless as a blind, that he did not believe a word of it and intended to start at once for the old world and "have his due," that he was not going to be cast aside as soon as he had accomplished all he had been employed to do, that for his sweet wife's sake, etc.

Aileen had no objection to go back to England, but she had a strong objection to be called "his sweet wife," so she calmly left the room.

The very next morning they drove back to Halifax, and took passage in the English steamer.

Rochester's furious fretting injured him much; he suffered from constant fever and sleeplessness. Aileen sometimes felt her heart sore for him, and when he chanced to catch her looking sympathetic he would lie as still as if laid by a spell and gloat his yearning eyes upon her.

The truth was he was allowing himself to love her with a love that astonished himself, it was so deep and unselfish; and he wanted her to think as well of him as possible; so one day he told her all his story.

He was the son of a very rich Manchester manufacturer, but had fallen into dissolute ways years ago, and had been disowned by his prudent father, who had no notion to see his calico bales turned into ducks and drakes. He had lost every penny he possessed to a sharper at gaming, whose very handsome wife had done her share of the spoliation with the cruelty of a fiend. So in revenge, he had shown her up, some years after, when he found her playing lady of quality in Malta.

She had never forgiven him, but managed to persecute him wherever he went, until finally when she offered him a rich young wife with a princely fortune, if he would leave England for ever, he was glad to consent. That was how he was drawn into the crime of abducting and forcibly marrying Aileen. Now she swore there was no fortune, but he would never believe her. He had seen the papers which traced back the Guillamores to an estate in France, "Christabel Snowe," as she called herself, would not shrink from any deception, but she would find for once that she couldn't cheat him.

Aileen said she was very sorry for him. He wept. Could she not learn to love him? No; she became like ice.

One day the ship's doctor said to her: "He will die of that wound, mark my words, ma'am. It wasn't much at first, but there's so much bad blood in him and he has worried so much that it will kill him at last."

Aileen's heart filled to overflowing with horror and compunction. She began to wish, for the first time, that she had never dealt that blow.

She became tender to him, and softened whenever her eyes lit on his haggard face.

One day she told him what Mademoiselle de Fleury had related about the Chateau Gracedieu and the two Irish sisters Guillamores who were to inherit the Clairmarais estates.

She told him this half to amuse him half to assure herself that there must have been some truth in it, since Denis, the old servant, had gone to see about it.

She was amazed at the effect of her words. "Clairmarais!" cried the sick man, springing up in his berth, "that's the name! The fiend never told me where the estate was, but I know now! Sorceress!" he shrieked, shaking his clenched fist in the air, "I have you now! I'll find you at Clairmarais before I die!"

The suddenly acquired energy of this dying man was quite surprising. From that moment his spirits never flagged, he had endurance for everything.

The voyage, which had been before far too much for his fevered frame, now seemed to brace him up for the farther exertions he intended to make.

"You see," he would say to Aileen, with an eagerness which was frightful, as he lay back in his well-pillowed invalid chair on deck inhaling the breeze. "I am sure to find her reigning in state at Clairmarais! If she had been forced to go on board the yacht I would have had a telegram from Zolande. Zolande is up to everything, and, of course, she expected us after her very first chance. Did I ever tell you that 'La Croce' didn't belong to me? That it belongs to madame, and was only lent me to carry off my pretty little bride, who doesn't care if I die."

He covered his face, and weakly sobbed; that was the general wind-up of such speeches.

"'La Croce' belongs to Mrs. St. Columb?" asked Aileen, ignoring the tears.

She was vividly interested in all that pertained to the wicked woman who so cleverly had ousted her and Vara out of their rights.

"Yes," resumed Rochester, sardonically; "and

whenever she and her precious blackleg of a husband got into bad repute at one place they would get on board 'La Croce' with their score of attendant swindlers, and disappear for months together. I believe they have haunted all over the globe. Then when they were forgotten they would come back with greater élan than before, and commence operations in some new city under new names and characters. They had money enough to do anything, and it didn't take petty swindling to keep them going."

All this and much more concerning our esteemed friend did the cheated tool pour into the attentive and wondering ears of Aileen, when he was not making plans to trip up the adventures or fuming and raging at the slow speed of the steamship.

Arriving at Liverpool he made immediate arrangements to cross to the Continent, without taking time to visit London, in order to learn whether "La Croce" was still there. He hurried on like a madman, dragging Aileen with him.

At Calais his strength collapsed, the hotel-keeper remarked:

"Par Dieu, this is singular! A lady called Christabel Snowe became ill, just as with monsieur, two weeks ago, in arriving off the Dover boat!"

"Did she?" cried the invalid, reviving from a swoon; "and what became of her?"

"Monsieur is doing well! But the lady? She was taken in one of my own voitures to Ferrache, where she now lies, alas!"

"Where is Ferrache?"

"Ferrache is—ah! but four leagues distant if you go by a little bye-road; but five—six and a—"

"Have a post-chaise at the door in fifteen minutes, and see that the horses are fresh."

Rochester was driven to Ferrache, lying on the bottom of the carriage; he could not hold up his head, but his eyes burned malignantly still.

Arriving at the village late in the night they were forced to seek accommodation at the only inn the place afforded.

The valet and the innkeeper carried the invalid to bed; Aileen retired to a small room on the ground floor, so utterly worn out with their travels that she could scarcely undress.

The rest of this extraordinary night's experience shall be presented in her own words:

"Perhaps I felt in myself the influence of my dear sister's near presence, and the fact brought her image more distinctly than usual to me; perhaps there is such a thing as the magnetic influence of soul on soul. Heaven knows. Once my sister was very ill, and I was her constant nurse night and day. Whenever I saw her safely asleep I used to steal from the room to lie down for a short nap in another room quite out of hearing. I was obliged to do so that the noise I made in rising or undressing might not disturb her; and I knew as I lay there asleep the moment that Vara opened her eyes, and was always up and at her bedside as she was looking about for me."

"She had perfect faith in the fact that I knew the moment to come, and neither she nor I ever felt any surprise as long as the necessity lasted. It was only afterwards when we were both well and happy that we thought it singular."

"Well, on this night, after I lay down, I dreamed of her; nothing distinct, but only a growing consciousness of Vara and a restless anxiety to go to her. Suddenly, as I slept, I knew that Vara needed me, as I used to know it, and I rose on the instant to go to her. When I awoke I had crossed the road from the inn in my night-dress, entered the house by the only casement which could have admitted me, advanced to the foot of her bed, and she was calling 'Aileen.' Explain it I cannot, but it may have been that Vara was rendered so intensely susceptible by suffering and illness, in fact, that her soul was so nearly free of the shackles of mortality that it paid mine a visit, and mine responded and led my body in a state of somnambulism straight to her side, whom I had gone to bed believing to be at home in the old Castle of Inohvarra. In the refined and exalted state of her organization this is possible."

A few words will suffice to explain how Winstanley traced the presumed Christabel Snowe, and found her at such a critical juncture.

He had set out instantly on the traces of the party upon reading the exposé in the papers, intent only on achieving the arrest of the infamous woman whom he now felt convinced to be sapping the life of his friend Kenelm Guillamores. Of Mrs. St. Columb he never thought, excepting as a lady of wealth upon whom the arch-plotter had fastened herself until her designs should be carried through.

Strangely enough, all his searching was in vain until two weeks had passed by. Then, in Calais, at the very hotel where Rochester had heard of the whereabouts of Christabel Snowe, Winstanley, standing by the merest accident beside the newly arrived party from Dover, waiting to bid the hotel-master

good-bye and cross in the return boat, heard his words, and rushed for Perrache in the first fiacre he could hail.

The miserable intriguante was ill—perhaps dying; that thought turned his hate to pity. He easily found the house, and we have witnessed the result.

At break of day the vagabond doctor came out of Vana's chamber, and the dull, small eyes were snapping with exultation.

"She's on the safe side now," said he to his friends who had been spending the hours in anxious waiting.

Kenelm, who was lying wan as a ghost on a sofa, sprang up and seized De St. Cyr's reluctant hand in a hearty grip.

"Bring her through all right and you'll never be persecuted by me," exclaimed he.

The Count de St. Cyr (ad Sandy McWhirter) bowed, and returned to his patient with a heart as light as his conscience was—not.

Some hours afterwards Vana's friends were allowed to pass into the room, one at a time, to see her.

She was awfully death-like, and the mortal agonies she had endured, from the powerful antidotes administered by the physician had given her sweet face a drawn and sorrowful look. But her eyes were open, and beaming with consciousness, and her shadowy hand was clasped in Aileen's, who sat by her, with the fond, brooding look of a mother in her blue eyes.

Kenelm came first, and as he now for the first time in ten years saw his two sweet sisters together, and marked the beautiful semblance of his dead father in Vana, and of his dead mother in Aileen, his heart filled with a tide of quick emotions, he clasped both in his arms at once, and faltered forth for Heaven's blessing on their young heads.

Vana could not speak, but her smile was eloquent. Next came Winstanley, and he hung over her with a long impassioned gaze. There was no horror or disgust there now, but instead an imploring earnestness which took vastly with the little lady in waiting.

Vana saw, and her dark eyes responded glowingly. On his knee sank the young peer, and tenderly kissing her feeble hand, he murmured:

"Oh, my love, my sweet girl, how I have wronged you!"

The little tyrant, Aileen, gently urged him away, saying this was no time for sentiment.

Next came Captain Sherrard; but it was at Aileen his black, blazing eyes shot the first glance, and her tiny hand he held in a greedy grip as he stood glowering down compassion which he could not speak to the invalid.

"Ain't she awfully white?" whispered he, in anything but an angel's whisper. "Poor thing! Wish the woman that did it was a man."

"Darling Vana, this is Charley Sherrard," said Aileen, her smile beaming and beaming.

Vana had not heard a word about this hero yet, of course, but she looked as pleased as if she knew all about it.

"I say, little Yellow-Hair," muttered Sherrard, his devouring anxiety getting the better of him, "are ye Mrs. Rochester yet?"

"No—nor have I ever been Mrs. Rochester," returned Aileen, with a very soft pressure of his big fingers.

"That's all right, lovey!" said he, deeply gratified.

Then, fearing to wear his welcome out, he stooped and kissed Vana's white brow, saying:

"That's because you're to be my sister some day, miss."

Which speech covered Aileen with blushes and frowns, and caused his instant dismissal.

Last of all came honest Shane Guillamore, who stood shyly in the doorway gazing with reverential awe at the ghost on the bed, until the little lady fluttered away to him, shook him by both hands, and led him to the foot of the bed.

"Och, sure! an' she's the beautiful angel all out," exclaimed the young man, deeply affected; "an' by the Tin Commandments, she's like me own sister Katty across the eyes of her. An' ye'll say so yerself Miss Aileen, darlint, whin ye see her. Och; an' isn't it as plain as day that we wor poor relations, an' that's why the black-hearted thieves—"

But here Aileen thought it expedient to cut short his eloquence, so she took him out and asked him sundry questions about his movements since they were parted, and extracted a good deal of information concerning Captain Sherrard's feelings when he discovered she was not on board, which must have deeply gratified the little damsel, for she returned to Vana with a pair of cheeks like roses.

And the crisis was passed; Vana was to live.

(To be continued.)

MONTHLY V. QUARTERLY PAYMENTS.—A good story is told of Mr. Gladstone by Lord Granville. Shortly after their accession to office the practice of paying the clerks in the various public offices their

salaries monthly was adopted. Lord Granville ceased to be circulated through the Foreign Office a paper on which the clerks of his department were to state whether they preferred the old system of quarterly payments or wished the new practice to be introduced into the Foreign Office. Mr. Gladstone added, in his own hand, "Mr. Gladstone experiences great satisfaction in receiving his own salary at the end of the month, but considerable disappointment at the end of each quarter."

SCIENCE.

GERMAN SILVER FOR CASTING.—Copper, 50 lbs.; zinc, 20 lbs.; nickel, best, pulverized, 25 lbs.

A new lamp has been patented for taking photographs at night, in which bisulphide of carbon is burned in peroxide of nitrogen. It is said to equal sunlight in its effects and intensity.

EFFECT OF SOAP WATER ON INCANDESCENT METALS.—A red-hot copper ball plunged beneath the surface of water containing soap remains quiet, being surrounded with a thick envelope of vapour.

Among the recently patented novelties is a method of mending cracked church bells, so as perfectly to restore their tone. It is done by introducing a furnace within the bell, to warm up and fuse the edges of the cracks, at the same time pouring in new metal enough to fill out the crack, the sides of the bell being covered with plates to prevent escape of molten metal.

DAYS A MONTH LONG.—Professor Purser believes that the moon, in revolving around the earth and drawing the tides behind her, causes the latter to act as a brake on the revolution of the globe, and he considers that it may be mathematically shown that this action is slowly but surely checking the earth's speed of rotation, so that the days and nights are gradually lengthening. In a thousand million years or so they may become each a month long.

THE MARTINI-HENRY RIFLE.—The following notice has been issued from the Adjutant-General's office:—"It having been decided to issue Martini-Henry rifles to the Infantry at home, officers commanding regiments are directed to forward at once, to the local controllers, demands for the arms required for their respective corps, on the receipt of which they will return into store the arms now in their possession. The ordinary bayonet will be issued, except to sergeants, and all ranks in the 60th Rifles and Rifle Brigade, who will be supplied with sword-bayonets."

SELF-LIGHTING GAS BURNER.—In this there is a little chamber beside the burner in which is placed a roll of paper, along which are dots of a harmless compound, which will take fire by percussion. The end of this roll is carried up near the orifice of the burner; and by turning the cock, the uppermost match is lighted by a slight blow, thus igniting the gas. The device works well and remains operative as long as any of the roll of paper, the end of which is constantly brought into position by very simple mechanism, remains. The cost of the apparatus is said not to exceed that of the matches ordinarily employed.

LEAF AND FLOWER IMPRESSIONS.—Take a small quantity of printer's ink, thinly put it on glass or on the lid of a blacking box, let it be evenly distributed. The end of the index finger will serve as the printer's ball, to cover one side of the leaf uniformly; then lay it to the exact place where you wish the print to be; lay over it a piece of thin, soft paper large enough to cover it, then, without moving the leaf, press all parts of it with the end of the thumb firmly, and you will have a perfect impression that no engraver can excel; and, by adjusting the leaves at the proper points, accurate prints can be taken, and, aided with the brush or pen, the stem and whole plant can be shown.

A MACHINE has at length been constructed which will travel at a speed of nine knots an hour for three hundred yards, and at a lower speed for no less a distance than a mile. It will maintain any direction impressed upon it, and it can be launched either from a boat or an ironclad, by night or by day. In short, it is a kind of explosive fish, which, in obedience to its masters, will swim for a mile towards any adversary at which it may be directed, and will strike a dangerous, if not a fatal, blow. If ships at a distance of a mile can be struck with certainty by mechanical fish discharged from a harbour, no anchorage will be safe, and when two fleets approach one another each will have to encounter innumerable invisible foes. Every sea and harbour will practically be a mine of torpedoes, and any vessel of light construction must be hopelessly doomed.

NEW THEORIES OF VOLCANOES AND EARTHQUAKES.—Dr. Vaughan endeavours to show that the terrestrial crust, if reposing on lava of a declining temperature, would receive accessions of buoyant solid material, chiefly on such points as extend deep

into the fiery menstruum, and that the consequent growth of internal mountains would be interrupted only by the occasional movements of this light matter to positions much higher than those at which they were first deposited. To the collision of such masses against the weaker parts of the earth's crust, earthquakes are ascribed. Volcanoes are explained by quantities of silicious rock rising and eroding channels. The same spots of the earth's crust, being thus exposed to repeated inroads of intensely heated matter, would be reduced in thickness by the frequent fusion, and would present a weaker barrier to subterranean violence.

NEW AND POWERFUL IRONCLAD.—The Brazilian ironclad "Independencia" has been at last launched on the Thames. The vessel has sustained no injury and will probably be in the possession of the Brazilian Government by the end of the year. She is one of the most powerful ironclads in the world; is of 5,200 tons burden; will be fitted with Penn's expanding trunk engines of 1,200 indicated horse-power, working up to about 8,000 horse power; has a prominent gun-metal stem, forming a ram; will draw 24 feet 6 inches forward, and 25 feet aft, when fully armed and in sea-going trim; is 300 feet in length between perpendiculars, and has 63 feet of extreme breadth. Her armament, which is to be partly in two turrets and partly in bow and stern batteries, will consist of 35 ton-Whitworth guns, and she will be barque-rigged. She is expected to make fifteen or sixteen knots an hour with a single screw.

MULLER'S NON-EXPLOSIVE SELF-LIGHTER.—This invention consists of an improved form of the Döb-reiner or hydrogen lamp, a well known and useful apparatus in every chemical laboratory. The reservoir is filled with water acidulated with sulphuric acid, and a piece of zinc, enclosed in a bottomless tube, is lowered therein. The hydrogen thus generated rises through the tube, and, when the stopcock is pressed down, escapes from a small orifice above, and comes in contact with a fragment of spongy platinum held in the small bell near. The platinum is thus caused to become highly heated and to ignite the gas jet. The improvements which this device offers over the ordinary lamp consist in the vertical channel through which the hydrogen passes. When, as is usually the case, the gas is forced to turn into a horizontal outlet, the small particles of sulphuric acid which are carried up accumulate in the passage, corroding the metal and preventing a free escape of the gas. By having the whole channel in a vertical position, the acid will readily flow back to its reservoir.

NEW SPECTROSCOPE.

THE instrument is the invention of Professor A. K. Eaton, and is by himself named "a direct-vision spectroscopy." It consists of a thick plate of glass with parallel sides, united to one of the faces of an ordinary bisulphide of carbon prism, or a prism of dense flint glass. According to the amount of dispersion desired, the light is made to enter either on the end of the glass plate, or on the opposite face of the bisulphide prism. The results obtained from this instrument are as follows:

The dispersion of this compound prism is nearly four times greater than that of the ordinary 60 deg. prism. The mean emergent ray is practically parallel to the incident ray. It does not deflect the ray from its original path. Many Fraunhofer lines are visible by this prism to the naked eye, while with the observing telescope all the prominent lines are clearly reversed, without the use of the slit or collimator, by merely throwing a strong beam of light by means of a mirror.

When the usual appliances of slit collimator and telescope are employed, it widely resolves the D line, and shows the nickel line between these two lines—a result claimed as the best obtained by a four prism instrument of Browning.

It is stated that a simple bisulphide prism in this instrument gives a dispersion of 40 deg. between the B and G lines; when it is used for projection, it gives a spectrum 8 ft. long at a distance of 10 ft. from the screen, enabling 100 dark lines to be counted.

It is evident, therefore, that this prism promises to become a most valuable instrument for projection in the lecture room, while either solar, electric, or oxyhydrogen illumination may be employed, having the great advantage of simplicity of adjustment, since it avoids the necessity of turning the lantern after the slit has been focussed on the screen.

STRENGTH OF CANINE VITALITY.—A remarkable instance of tenacity of life in a dog has occurred in Lewis. Some weeks ago Mr. Price of Rhiwles Hall, North Wales, while on a visit at the park shooting in Lewis, lost a valuable bull terrier, upon the Shiant islands, which are situated in the Minch several miles off the coast, and where he had gone to shoot. It was supposed he had fallen over the rocks and got killed. Presently while the shepherd upon the island

was making his usual rounds he noticed what appeared to be an animal on some rocks at the foot of a high precipice. Procuring a boat he proceeded to the spot and found the long-lost dog still in life, but so emaciated and weak that it could scarcely move. The constant rolling of the surf against the rocks had also made the poor animal deaf. The dog was at once removed to Elaken Lodge, where it received every attention, and is progressing rapidly. There was no vegetation of any kind upon the rock, and from it there was no escape but swimming.

EXPECTATIONS.

CHAPTER XXXV.

ADRIAN ROSSITUR had remained at Blair Abbey a week after Charlot Lyle's departure for Petrel House, and had then gone up to London. Being of independent fortune, without profession, he was free to follow his own inclinations, and these kept him in town during the ensuing fortnight. The telegram announcing the fate of Miss Lyle had been sent to him at Blair Abbey, and Joliette had hastened to transmit it to his London address.

Within an hour after its receipt he was on his way to Dorsetshire and to Petrel House.

On arriving at Admiral Bohun's residence he found there Miss Stair, Mr. Weston, and Mr. Vernon, who had also been summoned from London by Joliette, and who manifested the liveliest anxiety in regard to the fate of his fair young missing kinswoman.

The renewed search for Charlot Lyle was keen and thorough, but, as before, it was vain. The girl had disappeared utterly, and the slippery rocks, the deep and treacherous sea, and the little relics that had been discovered, attested only too plainly her doom.

As if to make assurance doubly sure, and to extinguish the faintest lingering hope, her little fur cap, all sodden with wet, battered and nearly shapeless, was dashed against the rocks by an incoming tide, and Adrian Rossitur discovered it, and, with a ghastly face, brought it to Joliette, who identified it as having belonged to Miss Lyle.

The little party lingered at Petrel House for three days, offering a large reward for the recovery of the body of the unfortunate girl. The fishermen along the coast searched far and near, but the sea kept its secrets pitilessly, and at last Joliette returned to Blair Abbey, attended by Mr. Weston, unable to bear a longer separation from her boy.

Vernon travelled by the same train, going to Waldgrove Castle.

Rossitur chose to remain at Petrel House a week longer, and at the expiration of that period he also journeyed to Blair Abbey, his frank, boyish face wearing a graver look than of old. With him to love once was to love for ever, but he was not one to wear his heart upon his sleeve, not one to parade his grief, and only Joliette knew how desolate his life was suddenly become, how all its warmth and brightness had been quenched in the waters of the sea, under whose cruel dancing waves poor young Charlot Lyle was supposed to lie, white and cold and still, in the grim embrace of death.

"Was supposed to lie," we say. In reality Charlot Lyle was not drowned nor dead.

She was once again the victim of Vernon's treacherous plot—once again Vernon's prey.

After her departure from Blair Abbey, Vernon had ascertained whether she had gone, and had consulted with his valet, who had hailed her change of residence as affording better opportunities for carrying out the designs they had so long cherished against her life.

"You see," said Gannard, "we must do no murder. The laws are strict, and we must not incur any risks. We're both regular law-abiding subjects, we are," and he grinned. "We've had two accidents, and Miss Lyle came out of both safely. The third will fetch her."

Sir Mark Trebasil invited his relative to return to the castle at his earliest convenience, and Vernon accepted the invitation.

Upon arriving in town, Vernon and his valet proceeded to an aristocratic West-end private hotel, and Gannard here took leave of his master, and departed upon a fortnight's tour among old friends and acquaintances.

It was during his absence upon this tour that Charlot Lyle so strangely disappeared.

Had any suspicion been aroused that Miss Lyle's disappearance had been the result of design, no one could have suspected Charles Vernon of having been concerned in it.

During his stay in London every day and nearly every hour of his life could have been accounted for.

Among his visits thus was one to Harold Park, his first victim.

He found the artist propped up by pillows in his humble lodging at Kensington, still hard at work upon the picture Sir Mark Trebasil had ordered so many months before. Park had suffered much, and was thin to attention and pale to ghastliness. There had been days and weeks when he had not been able to touch brush to canvas. The money which Sir Mark had generously sent him as advance payment had long ago been expended in doctor's fees, a generous diet, and various alleviations of his sufferings. He was too proud to apply to the baronet for more money until the picture should be completed, and it was the faithful wife who paid the rent, bought paint and brushes, port wine and dainties for her invalid husband out of her own scanty earnings as music teacher, while her attire was insufficient and her own fare was of the poorest.

Mrs. Park was out when Vernon entered the bare little room, and the artist, half-reclining in his invalid chair, was alone. There was a bright fire on the hearth, and a bright crimson rug covered the knees of the invalid.

Within his reach was a small round table upon which was a call-bell, a china dish filled with big thick-skinned white grapes and yellow oranges, and a tiny round tray upon which was a plate of sweet biscuit a goblet and a bottle of real port wine.

"Why, you take genuine comfort here," said Vernon, with surprise. "How does your picture come on?"

"It will be done in a week or two," replied the artist. "I think I shall finish that and my life together, Vernon. I am hardly able to work, but I cannot die in debt. Besides, when the picture is delivered and approved, there will be two hundred and fifty pounds due me from Sir Mark Trebasil. That will pay all my last expenses," and his thin, pale face flushed a little, "and will provide against Winnifred's utter destitution. I am working for her more than for myself, Vernon."

"And the doctors can do nothing for you?"

"Nothing," said the invalid, sorrowfully. "My race is run."

Vernon uttered some commonplace condolence, but his heart leaped up joyfully. His own judgment confirmed Park's words. The invalid was past all help—all hope. A few weeks—a few days even—must see his death.

The scheming villain waited until Mrs. Park came in. The day was chilly, cheerless, with a drizzling rain. Vernon's keen eyes noticed that the artist's wife was grown thin, and hollow-eyed, that her dress was cheap and thin, that her boots were of the cheapest, and that she was wet and chilled, but he noticed also that her face was bright and cheerful, and that it beamed with tenderness when her gaze rested upon her husband.

She was not glad to see Mr. Vernon, and he plainly read her distrust of him in her eyes.

She had but an hour to remain at home, having to give lessons again in the afternoon, and, as was her custom, she made her husband's tea and milk-toast, and prepared several dainties for his capricious appetite.

"Where is your dinner?" asked Vernon. "Or are you grown too ethereal for food, Winnifred?"

"It is necessary for me to wait upon Harold," said Mrs. Park, quietly, "so we never eat together now. My dinner is cooked before Harold rises in the morning, so that the smell of it may not distress him."

She waited upon her husband as upon a feeble and beloved child, and then stole to the closet, and in the shadow of its open door ate her solitary "dinner." Vernon, moving about the room, managed to catch a glimpse of her repast. It consisted of a slice of dry bread, a cold potato and a glass of water. For her husband were the Malaga grapes, the port wine, the dainties; for her the coarse and loathsome food of bitterest poverty. She was weak and worn and exhausted, and Vernon saw that she loathed the food she ate, and that she ate it only from a sense of duty, to keep up her strength that she might the better minister to and work for her husband.

A little later Vernon took his leave.

He did not visit the artist again during his stay in town.

He expected a communication of some sort from his valet, but none arrived.

At last, however, a telegram arrived to him from Joliette announcing Charlot Lyle's fate, and he hurried down into Dorsetshire by a train preceding the one by which Rossitur journeyed, the message to the latter having not been received quite so promptly as his own.

Vernon had joined in the search with the others, displaying the proper amount of anxiety and grief at his cousin's disappearance, and taking care to express his conviction that she was dead.

In good truth he did not know where she was, or whether she was living or dead. The manage-

ment of the affair had been left entirely to Gannard, upon whose devilish ingenuity he knew he could rely. It is needless to say that he hoped that she was dead.

Her exact whereabouts were known to Gannard and to few others.

Upon that day when Charlot Lyle had gone in the gloomy, late afternoon out upon the rocks for exercise and solitude after her long attendance upon her great-uncle, she had attempted a descent to the sea, and had halted midway down the bluff on its seaward side, and sat down in a little nook among the rocks.

It was some time before Miss Lyle noticed a small boat hugging the very shadow of the bluff in which was her own especial nook, and when her gaze rested upon it and the two rough-looking fishers occupying it, she scarcely deemed it or them worth a second glance.

Yet that little boat belonged to the fishing-smack up the coast, and the two men in it were Gannard, Vernon's valet, and Gannard's half-brother, a man after his own heart, named Jack Nichols.

Miss Lyle soon forgot the proximity of strangers. Fishermen were too frequently seen in that vicinity to be objects of curiosity. She enjoyed the strong breeze, the flight of the birds and her own thoughts, and the gloom of the afternoon deepened, and the shadows began to gather thickly on sea and shore.

Rousing herself at last she arose abruptly, with intention of returning to the house. But as she stood up she beheld just behind her as if cutting off her flight two men clad in sailor garments and wearing black beards, whose attitude appeared menacing.

Startled and affrighted Miss Lyle unconsciously stepped backward before the outstretched hands of the ruffians, and went whirling through space into the sea below.

The men, muttering curses, descended the rocks as rapidly as possible. They found the girl in the sea, unconscious, looking like one dead.

They drew her in their boat and covered her form with their nets. Then, taking up their oars, they rowed to the fishing-smack, and carried Charlot down into the rude, ill-smelling little cabin.

"She's dead!" said Jack Nichols. "Better have left her where we picked her up."

"She's not dead," said Gannard, feeling her pulse. "What should kill her? She did not strike the rocks. The water broke her fall. She was not in the sea long enough to drown. She's alive, I can feel her heart beat. Up with the sail, Jack. There's a fog coming up, bless our luck. Let your vessel show her heels. We must be far out to sea before the young lady is missed."

He went up to the deck to assist Nichols. The little vessel moved slowly out from under the shadow of the bluff, and then, catching the wind, went bowling out to sea.

Miss Lyle's unconsciousness continued nearly half an hour. But for the faint, irregular beating of her pulse, Gannard might have believed her dead.

But at last the lids lifted slowly above the ashen eyes, and the girl beheld bending over her a man with a shaggy black beard and two evil black eyes which struck terror to her soul.

"Not a word, miss," said Gannard, with an assumed hoarseness. "We have rescued you from drowning, and were going to take you home. Take this drop of hot brandy. It will bring you to yourself in no time."

And before the bewildered girl could object, or even utter a word, he had poured a portion of drugged brandy down her throat, and she fell back upon the divan again unconscious.

CHAPTER XXVI.

WHILE Joliette was absent from home upon her melancholy visit to Petrel House her enemy was busy at Blair Abbey. All the smothered envy and hatred of Mrs. Malverne, having suddenly found material to work upon, was finding vent in deeds of rankest treachery and ingratitude. Headless of the fact that she owed her life of pleasant idleness, her generous income, her very fare and shelter, to Joliette, she employed herself in working injury to her noble young benefactress, and it is perhaps needless to say that she was successful in her efforts.

Upon the morning of the day on which, at a later hour, Joliette returned home Mrs. Malverne entered the breakfast-room and sat down to her meal in solitary state.

"I had begun to think myself the attraction that drew him here," thought the widow, annoyed and dissatisfied. "But it is plain enough that he is one of her worshippers. He knew her abroad as I loved her, poor as she was, the obscure daughter of Julian Stair. Of course he adores her now that she is a great heiress, a power in society, a great beauty and all the rest of it. But I know Sir Mark Trebasil well. He is proud as Lucifer, jealous as a Turk, vindictive and

revengeful if he believes himself wronged or insulted. I believe that Miss Stair loves him, but, knowing his peculiar characteristics as I do and suspecting her peculiarities I know that I can separate these two as far asunder as the poles. I can destroy his love for her and win him to myself. I shall not care if he marries me through pique, through wounded pride, or to wound her. All I shall care for will be the worldly position, the wealth, the title of Lady Trebassil! The one who wins is the one who dares. She has the place and fortune I should have had. She shall not win everything from me upon which I have set my heart."

Mrs. Malverne set her lips together in a hard and bitter expression. She said to herself that she had nothing to lose and everything to gain, and that she could not scheme too boldly. Suddenly she would be sure to win the results she craved. She was lost in reflection, from which she was aroused by the entrance of the butler with the post-bag.

There were several letters, certain of which were addressed to Miss Stair. These were taken in charge by the butler. There were three letters for Mrs. Malverne, one from Miss Stair announcing that Miss Lyle's body had not been found, that the search had been relinquished, and that Miss Stair would arrive at Blair Abbey at six o'clock on the eighteenth, and desired the carriage to meet her at Langworth.

"The eighteenth!" exclaimed Mrs. Malverne. "That is to-day."

She transmitted Miss Stair's instructions to the butler, and took up the third letter.

It was post-marked Arpignon, France. It seemed as if all of Mrs. Malverne's blood flew up into her face.

The letter she had so anxiously expected had arrived at last. She thrust it in her pocket, and did not open it until in the privacy of her own room.

Its contents electrified her. She read the letter with a sinister joy.

"I wonder what Sir Mark Trebassil would say to this," she muttered. "He must see it. We'll see what he thinks of my lady after he reads this. Perhaps in his anger he may propose to me."

She sat down at her desk and wrote a note to Sir Mark Trebassil, asking him to come to her, and stating that she would be at a certain spot in the park at eleven o'clock, and that she hoped to meet him there, adding that she wished to consult him upon a matter of importance.

This letter she hastened to despatch by a groom. As she paused in a corridor that led to the kitchen offices she beheld Mrs. Bittle descending the stairs.

"Humph!" thought the widow. "Like mistress like maid. When Miss Stair is away her waiting woman puts on airs and takes her meals privately in my lady's chambers! What an appetite the old cormorant must have to judge by the number of dishes on that tray!"

She hurried up the great stair and softly tried Jollette's doors, one after the other. To her delight, the boudoir door was unlocked.

She opened it and crept into the room.

A swift glance assured the widow of the whereabouts of Jollette's little portable desk.

She ran to it and tried its fastenings. The key was gone.

With a promptness that surprised herself Mrs. Malverne caught up the dainty occitane, and hastened with it to her room.

She locked her doors and applied her own keys to the lock.

The little diary, whose contents she had once read, lay within. She transferred it to her pocket, re-locked the desk, and went out again to Miss Stair's apartments.

Mrs. Malverne improved the opportunity of returning the little desk. As she came out of the boudoir door she found herself face to face with Mrs. Bittle.

Mrs. Bittle's first thought was that the widow had discovered the hidden rooms and concealed child.

But becoming reassured after a scrutiny of Mrs. Malverne's face, the woman became self-possessed, and demanded:

"What are you doing in here, ma'am?"

"I was looking for you, Bittle," said Mrs. Malverne, glibly. "I have received a letter from Miss Stair, stating that she will be home to dinner."

Mrs. Bittle answered, coldly:

"I received a letter from my lady by the same post, Mrs. Malverne. If you want me at any time you can knock at the door of Miss Jollette's rooms; not enter them unbidden."

Mrs. Malverne made a deprecating response, and disappeared within her own chamber.

"The nasty prying cat!" muttered the waiting-woman, looking after her with keen dislike. "She's in here for no good."

Mrs. Malverne examined the diary at her leisure, and discovered that no recent entries had been made in it. Then she proceeded to make an elaborate toilet.

Then, with the diary and the foreign letter in her pocket, she set out ostensibly for a ramble in the park.

At a distance of nearly half a mile from the abbey, in an open glade off the great central avenue, was the spot appointed by Mrs. Malverne for her interview with Sir Mark Trebassil. Mrs. Malverne carefully dusted the wide bench and sat down.

"If he should not have been at the castle," she thought, apprehensively. "That stupid groom should have reported to me after his return. Sir Mark may have gone up to town. Ah, there he is!"

Her heart fluttered as Sir Mark Trebassil, tall, grand, and stately, came slowly up one of the narrow paths.

"Oh, I'm so glad to see you, Sir Mark, my dear friend," exclaimed Mrs. Malverne, gushingly. "I hope you won't think ill of me for asking you to meet me here. I have a revelation to make to you—"

"One that could not have been made at the abbey?"

"I could not have spoken there. I should have been afraid of being overheard. Surely, you do not misjudge me, Sir Mark? I need not say, and I know of no one to whom I can confide in you. You know Miss Stair so well. We have spoken of her before."

"Oh, it's about Miss Stair?" Sir Mark exclaimed. "You have done very well, Mrs. Malverne, to send for me. If you have anything to say about her. What is it?"

"She is coming home to-day. Miss Lyle's body has not been found. I had a letter from Miss Stair this morning."

"Is she ill? What is the cause of your trouble?"

"May I speak to you frankly, Sir Mark, as to a brother? Will you keep my confidence inviolate?"

Sir Mark gave the required promise.

"Then I will tell you all. I am young, poor, helpless," sighed the widow, "but my reputation is spotless, and not for the world would I allow a whisper to sully it. I ought to have the abbey, but where can I go? I am dependent upon this woman who has usurped my place. I am obliged to remain, yet I tremble for my future. There will be a great scandal here some day—a scandal that will ring from one end of England to the other. What scandal? Where can I hide from the coming storm?"

"What do you mean, Mrs. Malverne? You talk in riddles. Be so good as to explain yourself? Why should there be a scandal? And whom will the scandal concern?"

"Why, Miss Stair, of course. I have facts to communicate and prove to substantiate them," said Mrs. Malverne, illy concealing her triumph. "First of all, Sir Mark, I have here in my pocket Miss Stair's diary. You may know her handwriting. Read that entry."

She extended the tiny white morocco volume, with its golden clasps, to the baronet, but he shrank back, refusing it.

"Her diary!" he exclaimed. "And in your hands! Mrs. Malverne, I do not desire information procured in so dishonourable a manner. Return the book to the place in which you found it. I will not look at it."

"At least you shall hear what is written here," she exclaimed. "It is my justification, Sir Mark. I have made statements which this verifies. Listen; she says here: 'Drove to Langworth in my pony phaeton. Left the equipage in front of the book-seller's, while I secretly visited the house where he was waiting for me. Was with him nearly two hours. Oh, my darling, my own! I feel his kisses still upon my lips, my precious one! If I might only acknowledge him openly before all the world! How soon shall I be free? Heaven help me to be patient!'"

Sir Mark seized the volume and read the words Jollette had written. He recognized the handwriting. He stared at the paragraph which seemed such a confession of guilt, and which was the simple outpouring of a mother's innocent love for her unacknowledged child, and at last thrust the volume into an inner pocket of his coat.

"That book belongs to me," he said. "Do not fear, Mrs. Malverne. I shall not betray you. Have you more to say?"

"The worst is to come, but that book foreshadows it," said Mrs. Malverne. "You remember that in the letter I wrote to you—that letter which induced your return to England—I told you that Jollette Stair met her lover in a house at Langworth. Her own handwriting has now verified my statement."

"Yes, yes. Go on!"

"One morning," pursued the widow, "I went into Miss Stair's room unannounced. I knocked upon her door and fancied that I heard her voice bid me enter. Yet when I went in the rooms were empty. She must

have been in her bath-room. I went into her bed-chamber, for as she had not been down to breakfast I thought she might be ill. I was about to retrace my steps when I espied something on her carpet. I picked it up and brought it away in my bowdlerment and horror. This is what I found, Sir Mark."

She drew from her pocket a baby's sock—a tiny, short-legged, fleecy white sock—exquisitely dainty and fine enough for a baby's prince.

Sir Mark started back as if he had looked upon a Gorgon's head.

"What wretched farce is this?"

"Sir Mark Trebassil, I solemnly swear to you that I found that thing upon the floor of Jollette Stair's bed-chamber."

"That? In her room? I—I do not comprehend!"

"Then I may be able to enlighten you. Knowing and suspecting so much, is it any wonder that I should try to verify or to disprove my suspicions? My own reputation as an inmate of the abbey might suffer from my stay here. I could not risk that, Sir Mark. I remembered that Madame Falconer and Miss Stair were absent some months on the continent and that they preserved a mysterious reticence in regard to their place of absence. Quite accidentally I discovered that they had spent their months of absence in the region of the Pyrenees, at a little French town called Arpignon. Some three or four weeks ago I wrote a letter to the curé of Arpignon. I directed it to be sent to my letter this morning."

"Let me see it. You summoned me here that I might read it, did you not?"

Mrs. Malverne produced the letter, and gave it into the baronet's hands. He tore it open hastily and read its contents, which might have been translated as follows:

"Arpignon, Hautes Pyrenees, France.

"February 15th.

"MADAME—Your generous letter of inquiry was received by me only to-day, owing to my absence in Paris during the past month. I propose to myself to depart to-morrow upon a holy pilgrimage to Rome, and hasten to answer your epistle, which I must do in brief terms, as I have much to do here among my people, and my time grows short.

"The ladies in whom you are so deeply interested tenanted the Chateau Croisac, near Arpignon, during the summer of last year. They were attended by two women-servants, both English. The ladies were known as Madame Falconer and 'the beautiful Mademoiselle,' or Mademoiselle Jollette. Later the young lady was called 'the little Madame.' Madame Falconer was an eccentric old lady who adored her young charge. 'The little Madame,' gave birth to a son who was called Archibald Chichester.

"When the ladies quitted Arpignon, this child went with them in the care of their younger servant, who acted as nurse, and I have discovered during my recent stay in Paris that this nurse assumed to be the mother of the infant, the true mother being known in Paris as a demoiselle, Miss Stair.

"I should not have replied so frankly to your questions but that I observed from your letter that you must be deep in the confidence of the unhappy young mother who has been constrained through motives of pride to disavow her child.

"Accept, madame, the profound assurances, etc., etc."

"GUILLAUME DAULANT, Curé of Arpignon."

Sir Mark read this missive to its close, then crushed it and thrust it into his pocket.

His countenance was terrible. Mrs. Malverne was afraid of him.

"I will not believe it—I will not!" he exclaimed in a discordant, savage voice. "It is impossible!"

"You can easily assure yourself. I believe that the child's nurse, Meggy Dunn, brings the boy here at night to see his mother. If you watch you may see her late at night. Adrian Rossiter will probably be on guard."

Sir Mark's face grew dark with fury.

"I will wait—I will watch!" he cried. "Better for her that she had never been born than to have this story proved true! A woman of whom such tales are told is already lost! And I—oh, Heaven!"

He broke away from the hand that would have detained him and plunged into the depths of the park.

Mrs. Malverne looked after him with a satisfied smile.

"He believes it, in spite of his denial, and he looks like a demon! He is mad enough to kill Jollette! He will cool off before her return—he will watch and wait—he will detect Meggy Dunn with the child in the abbey grounds—and he will then utterly hate and despise Miss Stair. His love for her dies hard, but it will die! And I shall make him marry me that he may revenge himself upon her! Ha, ha! And meanwhile, it seems almost as if tragedy were impending!"

(To be continued)



[A COOL REQUEST.]

WITHERED VIOLETS.

THE episode in my life of which I am about to narrate the history happened long, long ago, when I was quite a young man, in fact, and while the world was still to me an untrodden wilderness. It passed away, as such episodes will do, but has left its traces behind, one of which is the portrait which hangs above the writing-table in my library. That picture was the work of a famous court painter, and is a reproduction of one of the most celebrated of his works. It was my first piece of extravagance, when I inherited the fortune which I now enjoy, and the price I paid for it was sufficiently large, to induce me to keep silence respecting it. Call it folly, weakness, if you will, your portrait is still dear to me, as representing the brightest dream of my youthful years.

I was a poor medical student in those days, and was learning my profession in the hospitals and lecture-rooms of Paris. My purse was but a slender one, and therefore I occupied two modest little rooms in a house in the Rue d'Azor, a small street running out of the Rue Jacob, and long since swept away. There was but one of my fellow-lodgers in whom I took any interest at all, and that was a bright-eyed, sharp-looking, trim little old Frenchwoman, about seventy years of age, who occupied the rooms two storeys above my own. Contrary to the usual custom of her sex and country, she was extremely taciturn and unsocial; she seemed to have neither friends nor acquaintances in the house and never was to be caught gossiping at the door or in the street outside. We had been fellow-lodgers for months and had passed and repassed each other on the stairs repeatedly, before she would so much as vouchsafe me a good morning or even a glance from her keen black eyes in return for the salutation which I always bestowed upon her as I passed.

My curiosity was aroused, and I asked the concierge about her. The concierge had but little to tell me,

yet that little was interesting. Madame Jeanne, as she was called in the house, had occupied her present quarters for more than two years. She had been a servant for many years, nay, nearly all her life, in some very grand foreign family, but had finally been pensioned off, it was supposed, not exactly by the family, but by one of the daughters, with whom she had been a great favourite.

"And do you know the name of this grand family with which she used to live?" I questioned.

Old Babette shrugged her shoulders.

"How can one remember these queer foreign names? Stop, this one was quite like French. Mon—Mon—Montred'or! No, no, it was Montrevor! That's it—Montrevor!"

"An English family, doubtless," I said to myself as I turned away, after thanking Mother Babette for her information.

Chance at last threw me into direct relations with old Jeanne.

Coming home late one night, after an unusually prolonged lecture, I heard, on entering our little street, a loud noise as of dogs and cats fighting, and on hurrying forward I came to the spot just in time to rescue a fine white Angora cat from the jaws of a party of ferocious street curs.

The poor creature had made a brave fight of it; but its silky white fur was spotted with blood, its side was badly torn, and one of its fore legs was broken. The size and beauty of the animal, as well as some feelings of common compassion, induced me to carry it to my room and endeavour to minister to its hurts. I washed its wounds, bound up its broken leg in splints, and placed it on a soft cushion, and in the morning I was pleased to find that it could lap a little milk, and was quite capable of looking after its wounds for itself. When I went downstairs I found Babette in quite an excited state of mind.

"Ah, monsieur," she cried, on catching sight of me, "such a sad affair! Poor Madame Jeanne—so old and so lonely—"

"What is the matter with Madame Jeanne? Has anybody robbed her, or tried to murder her?"

"No, no! sir, but she had a cat. Oh, such a cat! Tall as that, and as white as snow, and so good-natured and fond of her! And Minette strayed away yesterday, and there is blood and white fur on the stones outside, so poor Minette must have been killed and eaten up by the horrid dogs. And Madame Jeanne is in such a way—"

"Tranquillize yourself, my good madame," I said, smiling. "I saved the life of Minette. She is sorely hurt, to be sure, but still she will get well. I have her safe in my room, and will go and take her to Madame Jeanne at once."

So, not waiting to listen to Babette's ejaculations of pleasure and surprise, I retraced my steps to my room, took Minette in my arms, and hastened upstairs with her, and knocking, was told to enter.

The room was as neat as hands could make it, simply, but abundantly furnished, and adorned with sundry small luxuries, such as a gilt clock, a few coloured devotional pictures, and a jardinière filled with blooming and carefully tended plants.

Madame Jeanne was seated near the table, and I saw at a glance she was not alone. The moment she saw the cat she rushed forward, snatched it from me, and then began a scene of petting and fondling, and tender words and caresses, that showed how deeply she was interested in the pretty animal that was almost the only solace that her loneliness knew.

During this little scene the person (a lady dressed in black) that I had observed with Madame Jeanne when I first entered had remained silent and somewhat withdrawn to one side. In the midst of the old woman's raptures she came forward.

"My dear old nurse is too much agitated to thank you as she should do," said the softest, sweetest voice I had ever heard. "Let me do so in her stead."

As she spoke she threw back the black lace veil that shaded her features, and revealed to my gaze a face whose delicate and exquisite beauty made an impression on my soul that has never been effaced.

An oval face; soft, dreamy, almond-shaped eyes, made darker by long lashes; a gleam of golden-shaded hair above a broad, low brow; a lovely, rose-red mouth, with teeth like snow-flakes; and a smile of sunshine—such was the visage that beamed upon me then from beneath the shadow of the vaporous lace.

A tall, slender form, with grace and high-bred elegance in every curve of its dainty outlines; a hand, white, tapering and aristocratic in its shapely slenderness; a foot more exquisite still, peeping from beneath the folds of her silken draperies, filled up the rest of the picture, and completed the bewilderment of admiration into which the beautiful face so suddenly revealed had plunged me.

The fair unknown saw my confusion, and evidently guessed its cause, for a smile dimpled her cheek, and, extending her hand graciously, she repeated the thanks which she had first uttered.

By this time, too, Madame Jeanne had recovered from her surprise.

"Ah, monsieur," she said, with tears clouding the keen black eyes, "you see one must have something to love, and Minette knows my voice, and eats out of my plate, and is as wise as a child, almost—art thou not my treasure? And I thought I had lost her. I cannot help crying; but I thank you all the same. And if monsieur would not mind coming, sometimes—"

"Monsieur is a doctor then," interrupted the fair unknown.

"I am studying medicine, and shall be happy to place myself at the service of M^{lle} Minette," I answered.

For I felt to gain another glimpse of that lovely face I would have attended a hundred cats.

"Do so, if you please, and any remuneration—"

"Pardon me," I interrupted, haughtily. "I must look upon Minette as my first patient; and to be paid for my visits would only bring me ill-luck. Let me have the pleasure of curing her, for the sake—of—of—my fellow-lodger."

"As you will. But you must let me thank you again, in my own name, as well as in that of Jeanne."

And a slight bow, perfectly decisive in its polite dismissal, warned me that the interview was at an end.

I had nothing to do but to bow in return and to retire, which I did, bearing with me to my lonely room as bright and intoxicating a vision of beauty as ever troubled the soul of youthful manhood.

What wild dreams, what dazzling recollections haunted me thereafter in the solitude of my lonely chamber. The beautiful face, the melodious voice, the sad, soft eyes, the sweet, sweet smile of the unknown were ever present to my thoughts, and nightly haunted my dreams. I caught myself wondering about her, and speculating as to her home,

her surroundings, her character, herself. She called old Jeanne her dear nurse, I soliloquized, then she must be the young girl whose bounty supported Jeanne. She must be Mdlle de Montrevor. Yet she was not English, for the French which she spoke was of the purest, both as regards accent and style. But what did it matter to me anyway? What was her identity or her character to me? We probably should never meet again.

For a fortnight I tended the wounds of Mdlle Minette most assiduously, and succeeded not only in restoring her to perfect health but in winning her feline heart as well. She knew my voice, and would come limping to meet me, and always purred loudly under my caresses. But, during that time I saw nothing more of the lovely lady of my dreams. Once I ventured to question old Madame Jeanne, who had become quite sociable and friendly with me, respecting her. But the old woman's manner changed in an instant.

"The young lady. What young lady?" she snapped.

"The young lady who was with you, the day I brought home Minette."

"Well, what of her?"

"Is her name Montrevor?"

Old Jeanne fixed on me her piercing black eyes. "If you cannot come here without asking impertinent questions you had better stop away," she said, sharply and decisively.

Yet, strange as it may seem, those few brief moments passed in the presence of the beautiful unknown had left an impression behind them against which I strove in vain. Her image was ever present to my mind. Had I been an artist I might have striven to reproduce it on canvas or in clay; but my untaught fingers had no power to give bodily presence to the feverish dreams of my overwrought brain.

Some weeks had passed away, and Minette was perfectly restored to health, and I was forced, for want of a fitting pretext, to discontinue my visits to Madame Jeanne. The old woman's new-found friendliness had vanished under the recollection of my ill-timed and injudicious inquiries about her beautiful visitor, who I had relinquished all hope of ever seeing again, when, one day, as I was ascending the main staircase, my attention was attracted to the thick, tipsy accents of a drunken man's voice sounding on the floor above, and mingled with the sweet, yet imperious tones that I had once heard and never could forget.

Isprang up the intervening stairs in an instant and found, standing on the steps just below the landing, a young French artist, named Loubepine, who occupied a room somewhere in the attics, and whose dissipated habits were well known to all his fellow-lodgers. Though it was early in the afternoon, he was already intoxicated; and with arms outspread, he was trying to stop the progress of a black-robed, lace-draped, shrinking figure, whose graceful outlines I recognized at once, and with a thrilling heart.

"One kiss, mam'selle—one kiss—that's all I ask," he was saying, in the thickest possible tones, when, seeing him by the collar, I swung him on one side.

"Brute! to insult a lady!" I cried. "Pass on, mademoiselle; he shall trouble you no farther."

But Loubepine was not only gallant but quarrelsome in his cups. He flew at me at once, and a brief struggle ensued, which ended in my pitching him down the staircase. This seemed to cool his indignation, for he picked himself up, shook his fist at me, and slouched off, muttering vows of future vengeance.

I turned to look at the fair unknown. She was leaning back against the wall, and her face showed ashy pale, under the folds of her dusky veil.

As I advanced towards her she took one step forward, as if to meet me, tottered, awayed, and would have fallen senseless to the ground had I not caught her as she fell.

For one moment—for one brief, exquisite, priceless moment—I held her in my arms. It was but for a moment, however. She recovered almost instantly, and, disengaging herself, turned to descend the stairs.

But she was still too much agitated and unnerred to walk with firmness, and I ventured to offer her the support of my arm, and I asked if she would have a glass of water.

"No thank you," she said, sweetly. "I want nothing more, except words with which to thank you."

With this she threw back her veil, and turned on me the full lustre of the beaming smile.

I bowed and stammered some few words in reply. She bent her graceful head in farewell salutation, glided down the stairs, and was gone.

I did not seek to follow her. I saw that she did not wish for my assistance or companionship, and

there was too much chivalrous devotion in the feeling wherewith I regarded her to permit me to do anything that might be displeasing or distasteful to her.

But upon the stairs lay some tokens of her presence, a crushed bouquet of violets, and a tiny, pearl-tinted glove, dropped probably in the agitation of the moment.

I seized on these treasures, and bore them to my room, little dreaming of the significance of the violets that had been clasped in those fair hands.

Unlock yonder desk, there you will find them, both glove and withered flowers—wrapped in folds of white silk.

When I am laid in my coffin that little packet, which represents all of love I ever felt, is to be placed above my silent heart!

The weeks passed and grew into months. Yet, watch eagerly as I might, I never succeeded in catching a glimpse of that slender, graceful form, that lovely face, again!

Spring passed, and summer came, and a cold, bleak autumn succeeded.

One evening I was seated, absorbed in study, when a hurried tap at the door roused me from my abstraction.

"Come in," I cried.

The summons was obeyed by a scared-looking, panting little girl, whom I recognized at once as the daughter of the concierge.

"Oh, sir," she gasped, breathlessly, "you are a doctor, are you not? You cured Madame Jeanne's cat, and Madame Jeanne is so ill, and the doctor does not come—and—and—"

I waited to hear no more, but followed my little guide. A sad sight met my gaze as I entered old Jeanne's room. For on the bed lay my old friend, still wearing her everyday garments, and with a strange ashen-gray pallor overspreading her features, and beside her, on the floor, knelt the fair unknown. How, or by whom summoned, I never learned. She had been called away in haste, evidently, for she was in full evening dress. A robe of some pale blue tissue, flecked with silver, enveloped her graceful form, while its low-cut corsage displayed to view the exquisite slope of her shoulders, and the short sleeves revealed the snowy whiteness of her arms. Her hair, rolled plainly back from her forehead, was powdered with glistening silver powder, which shed on its silken, shining masses a lustrous beauty impossible to describe. Her cloak, flung off in haste, lay at some little distance from her on the ground. No words can describe the strange and thrilling incongruity of the scene; the dazzling loveliness and the festal garments of the young girl contrasted with the pale and contracted countenance of the dying woman—for the poor old creature was evidently dying—unpractised and inexperienced as I was, I could see that at a glance.

"Can you help her—can you save her?" whispered the young lady, eagerly, as I bent over the bed.

I shook my head in answer. A few brief questions had revealed the whole state of the case. Mother Jeanne had for years suffered from a complicated form of heart disease, and the last summons, as it usually does in such cases, had come with startling suddenness. She was perfectly conscious, however, and all her last thoughts and energies appeared consecrated to one object—the fair creature between whom and herself there seemed to exist, dissimilar as they were in age, station and circumstances—nay, in every point whatever—so close and strong a tie. Low, broken, whispered words were exchanged between them, and as from time to time I came forward to administer stimulants to the sufferer I noticed the wild, eager glance with which the dim eyes strove to follow the fair, beloved face thus for a moment turned aside. No one watched beside the lonely death-bed save the unknown and myself. The doctor, to be sure, came in, shook his head, confirmed my verdict and approved of my proceedings and departed, but with that exception our vigil was undisturbed for some hours.

The clock on the mantelpiece had chimed the first hour after midnight, when the door was opened, and a lady, evidently a grand dame, wrapped in a black mantle, and closely veiled, entered. With scarcely a glance at the bed or its occupant she approached the young lady and whispered something to her, but the latter only turned away with a gesture of positive denial.

"Come, you must come," said the new-comer, in a half-entreaty, half-authoritative tone.

"I will not. What, leave her? Leave my poor, devoted Jeanne at such a moment—"

"But you must—he will be there—you know—"

"I cannot. Think! If I was dying, and one I loved deserted me, no matter for what—"

She broke off abruptly. Her eyes filled with tears.

Her companion shrugged her shoulders, but she evidently saw that no more was to be said, and so she waited patiently for the end.

It came before long. There is a popular superstition that, just before daybreak, most persons die who die in the night. It was just before daybreak that Madame Jeanne died.

To the last the fair unknown knelt beside her, wiping the clammy perspiration from her brow, and moistening her parched lips. Just as the great clock from the church-steeple near by struck four the dying woman opened her eyes, and when she saw who was tending her put out her hand feebly, and smiled. Then, with a sigh, she died.

A few days later her funeral took place, and by its sumptuous character excited much remark in the quarter. A dark, foreign-looking servant attended to all the details, and paid all expenses with a most lavish hand. Then the furniture was sold, a new lodger took possession of Madame Jeanne's room, and the old woman was apparently forgotten by all, save myself, and possibly by Minette, who came to take up her quarters with me, and soon purred and cooed herself into my good graces.

I strove, meantime, to forget the fair unknown, and my wild infatuation for her. But it was in vain. As the weeks crept on, and the months, I was consumed more and more with the longing to see her once again.

I frequented the public drives and promenades at every leisure moment I could find; but the winter was a bleak, dreary, rainy one, and I never saw her—never. Probably the severity of the weather, I said, kept her within doors. As to the opera, and the theatres, and other such places of public amusement, my purse was too slender to admit of much expenditure for such costly luxuries. I did go, once or twice, but eagerly as I might scan the auditorium, I never saw that beautiful face.

One evening, as I sat alone, beside my handiit of fire, sadly musing over the blighted visions of my life, an old friend and fellow-student burst gaily and noisily into the room.

"Come, old fellow," he cried, "make haste and get your best coat on, and hunt up a pair of gloves. I want you to go to the Grand Opera with me. My old friend, the ballet-master, has given me two tickets. They play the 'Huguenots' to-night. Besides the emperor is to be there with his bride. It will be a sight worth seeing. Be quick!"

"Thanks," I answered, "I'll come with pleasure."

For at once the ruling infatuation of my life rose uppermost, and I said to myself:

"I may see her there, and I will go. What to me are emperors and empresses and opera-singers, if I can catch but one glimpse of that dear and forgotten face?"

My preparations were soon completed. An hour's time saw us seated in the Grand Opera House. We were well placed, just opposite the imperial box, and in the front row; and as we were early we had time to see the gay and brilliant audience arrive.

I had ever felt an intuitive conviction that my heart's idol must be sought for amidst the ranks of wealth and fashion, and as each box received its occupants I swept my opera-glass anxiously over the fair faces there assembled, but without result. Time passed; the conductor raised his baton and the magnificent orchestra commenced the overture of Weber's masterpiece. At that moment a lady and gentleman entered a box upon the lower tier. The gentleman was tall, haughty and elderly, the lady was—at last—my idol, my love!

Eagerly I turned to my friend.

"Do you know the name of the lady in yonder box?"

"She is the young wife of the Duc de Roncevaux. Have you not read of the magnificent nuptial ceremony? It is thought, parental authority sacrificed the fair young Adèle Montrevor."

And so the romance of my life passed for ever.

L. H. H.

DECAYING LEAVES.—A contemporary calls attention to the mischief which fallen leaves are capable of producing under certain circumstances, and especially on heavy lands. The ground that is strewn with leaves becomes a nursery of morbid influences. The beautiful odour that fallen leaves diffuse in woods suggests their harmlessness; but on the roads and walks, where the leaves are hourly crushed and the dropping rain helps to make a paste of them, they are, without doubt, pestiferous nuisances, which should be removed as quickly as possible by parochial authorities and private proprietors.

THE Duke of Norfolk has conferred a lasting favour to archaeologists by the restoration to its original condition of the state prison at Sheffield Manor, which was occupied by Mary Queen of Scots during the time that the preparations were being completed for her reception at Sheffield Castle. It was from this prison Sir Henry Percy so very nearly contrived the escape of the queen. Situated in the

suburbs of Sheffield, it has been for many years occupied as a farmhouse, and it is only just lately that its identity has been fully established. On removing the stucco from the heavy, thick walls the workmen discovered a doorway leading to a narrow spiral staircase, lighted by two small windows. On the ground floor are two rooms, one a guard-room the other a kitchen. Access to these was obtained through a door which has now been built up. The first floor contains two chambers, which were evidently occupied by the queen's attendant as day and sleeping rooms. Above these is a large room used as a state room by Mary, the ceiling richly embossed with the Talbot arms. Round the top of this room the fastenings still remain on which the tapestry was hung, and in the doorway are still the heavy hatches from which the door was hung. A bedroom adjoins and from thence, up a spiral staircase, the roof can be reached, where there is a platform which was probably used as a place from which the queen might with safety be allowed open-air exercise. Through the kindness of the Duke of Norfolk the place is open to the public.

THE POWER OF KINDNESS.

At a Convention of School Teachers, at which I was present, held some years since, a young lady teacher related an incident of her experience in teaching and government. She was a small, delicate woman, with a kind, intellectual face, and sunny eyes, and her voice was low and sweet.

She had been called to take charge of a school in a country village. She had heard that said school was composed of scholars hard to manage, but she believed that by kindness she could do it; and it came, somehow, to the ears of the pupils that the rod was to be cast out. Ere long, after entering upon her task, the teacher found that she had undertaken a difficult work of transformation; and she found the girls more difficult to manage than the boys. They treated her prayers with contempt, and her kind words with scorn. At length one day, during recess, when she had become thoroughly worn down and heart-broken, she bowed her head upon her desk and burst into tears, sobbing convulsively. Two or three of the girls saw her thus, and at once divined the cause. Their hearts were touched, and remorse followed. They told to their companions what they had seen, and how they had been affected; and that evening a consultation was held, with what result we shall presently see.

On the following morning, after the school had been called to order, six of the girls, who had been among the most unruly, advanced to the teacher's desk, and, with tears in their eyes, confessed how thoughtless and cruel they had been to a kind teacher, asked to be forgiven, and pronounced to do right in the time to come.

The teacher wept again, but now with gratitude and joy. She forgave and blessed all her pupils, and asked them, for their own sakes, if not for hers, to try if self-government were not the best kind of government, and if love one towards another were not the best and surest incentive to that government.

"I have that school still," she said, in conclusion, "and I hope I may keep it while I am called upon to teach. I have won the love and the confidence of my scholars, so that they obey me for their own pleasure. And if, perchance, a new scholar comes, with a disposition for wrong-doing, he quickly finds that he cannot be at home, nor be comfortable with his companions until he adopts the rule of self-government and self-respect." C.

COUNTY TREASURERS' ACCOUNTS.—The county rate returns for the year ending at Michaelmas, 1873, show that the county assessment for England amounted to 98,859,279*l.*, being 5,073,510*l.* more than in the preceding year; and the police assessment was 65,420,943*l.*, an increase of 2,462,378*l.*. The county rate averaged 2*d.* in the pound, the police rate levied in counties 2*d.*. The receipts from county-rates amounted to 1,096,098*l.*, an increase of 64,971*l.* over the preceding year; from police-rates 618,589*l.*, an increase of 84,749*l.*; from the treasury subvention for police 161,826*l.*; and for prosecutions and prisoners 167,660*l.*, the former item showing an increase of 5,378*l.*, and the latter a decrease of 18,486*l.*. There was also received 92,207*l.* on account of lunatic asylums, an increase of 18,324*l.*; and other receipts amounting to 568,332*l.*, an increase of 23,532*l.*, including 276,976*l.* from loans effected in the year on the security of rates. The total receipts reached 2,711,662*l.*, an increase of 128,463*l.*. The expenditure was 2,663,689*l.*, an increase of 148,110*l.*. The expenditure for police was 863,162*l.*, an increase of 49,711*l.*; for administration of justice, 588,888*l.*, a decrease of 18,399*l.*, this item including prosecution and conveyance of prisoners, their maintenance,

prison establishment charges, and reformatories; 394,758*l.* for lunatic asylums, an increase of 49,140*l.*; 141,094*l.* for salaries of county officers, an increase of 2,897*l.*; 399,880*l.* for loans, principal and interest paid off in the year, an increase of 1032*l.*; and 275,927*l.* for other expenses, an increase of 65,148*l.*, this item including 77,421*l.* for county bridges, 22,454*l.* for shire halls and judge's lodgings, 13,257*l.* for register of voters, and 9,532*l.* for militia store-houses. The amount of loans on the rates outstanding at Michaelmas, 1873, is stated at 3,247,845*l.*

WHO NOT TO MARRY.

Don't marry a man who wears an eyeglass, or tight boots with high heels, who curls his hair or moustache, who puts scent in his whiskers, or who bleaches his eyelids, who licks, cuts his finger-nails long and pointed, carefully out in an almond shape, who wears four-button gloves, takes six and three-quarters, and tells you so, who, if he is dark, wears a red cravat, if he be fair a sky-blue one—there is no surer indication of a man's character than his necktie—I always look at that first, who has enamelled visiting-cards and a brilliant monogram, and who always wears a rosebud in his buttonhole.

Don't marry a man who keeps bulldogs. He is sure to be like them.

Don't marry a man who gets up early. Nothing makes a person so insufferably conceited.

Don't marry a man whom nobody ever says any evil of. Be sure that he is a poor creature.

Don't marry a good-natured man. Good nature is to a man what the gilt-leaf with which naughty boys sometimes adorn a sparrow is to that untappy bird. All other sparrows surround and peck at him.

THE HOURS OF THE DAY.

If a man have the full control of his own time, he naturally desires so to map it out as to produce the greatest result with the least expenditure of vital force, and he will necessarily be guided very much by his own physical constitution and the nature of his occupations, whilst he will also seek to profit by the experience of others.

The German student and professor, who we must all acknowledge produces more result from his labours than the avant of any other nationality, is usually an earlier riser and an earlier diner. He finds in the society of his family, with occasional social festivities, sufficient relief from an absorbing study. But the number of hours that he works would be far too great for any more excitable brain.

For a writer of fiction, a dramatist, poet, or journalist, to devote himself to his study for as many hours as a German professor, would be to invite speedy paralysis or softening of the brain. Walter Scott tried it, you will remember, when he attempted the impossible task of clearing off his burden of debts. How he spoilt both his later works and the brain that had inspired so many charming pictures of life is plainly recorded in his life. Goethe's well-ordered brain produced his works without any undue strain upon his nervous powers. He was an early diner, and by no means indifferent to the pleasures of the table or the charms of female society. Shakespeare of course dined early, and probably divided his periods of composition and study by an afternoon devoted to amusement and repose. Dickens, we know, performed nearly all his literary work between the hours of nine a.m. and one p.m.

A distinguished man in another sphere, Von Meitner—one who has produced stupendous results from his powers of organisation—is, we believe, an early diner, and devotes the hours of the afternoon to amusement and exercise. Bismarck is said to have done most of his work in the early morning hours.

As to this early rising, there is no doubt that much work can be got through in the uninterrupted solitude of the early morning, but the stress on the brain is very great—as much so as in night-work. Schiller was a great night-worker, and wrote with the stars for his sole companions. Bulwer Lytton, again, always finished his work before luncheon.

We are inclined to think that the day-work is, on the whole, the best, and that the feverish facility of an over-excited brain is more fatal to real success than the interruptions and casualties of daylight.

THE TOWER OF LONDON.—At the present moment, when the free opening of the tower is exciting such general interest, it may not be uninteresting to mention a custom called the locking up of the tower, which is carried out nightly at eleven o'clock. As the clock strikes that hour the yeoman porter, clothed in a long red cloak, bearing a huge bunch of keys, and accompanied by a warder carrying a lantern, stands at the front of the main guard-house, and calls out, "Escort keys." The sergeant of the guard and five or six men then turn out and follow him to the outer

gate, each sentry challenging as they pass with "Who goes there?" the answer being "Keys." The gates being carefully locked and barred the procession returns, the sentries exchanging the same explanation, and receiving the same answer as before. Arrived once more at the front of the main guard-house, the sentry gives a loud stamp with his foot, and asks, "Who goes there?" "Keys." "Whose keys?" "Queen Victoria's keys." "Advance Queen Victoria's keys, and all's well." The yeoman porter then calls out, "God bless Queen Victoria." To which the guard responds, "Amen." The officer on duty gives the word "Present arms," and kisses the hilt of his sword, and the yeoman porter then marches alone across the parade and deposits the keys in the lieutenant's lodgings. The ceremony over not only is all egress and ingress totally precluded, but even within the walls no one can stir without being furnished with the countersign.

FAÇETIÆ.

THE sweetest thing in earrings is a miniature aquarium of rock crystal filled with water, in which swim miniature whales, lobsters, and shrimps.

NORTHERN THRIFT.—A doctor gave a man a box of antibilious pills with directions to "take one pill five times a day." An economical pill that.

A LADY said to a small Aberdeen boy she found crying in the street the other day: "Will you stop crying if I give you a penny?" "No," said he, "but if you'll make it twopenny I'll stop."

COOKEIANA.

"And now tell me why you left your last place."

"I will tell you that ma'am, when you have told me why you parted with your last cook."—Punch.

A GOOD FOUNDATION.—It is fortunate, in the face of the threatened attacks upon the City, that the Municipality of London should next year be headed with stone.—Punch.

ACCOMMODATING.

Officer (to native servant): "What caste are you, Ramjammes?"

Oriental: "Same religion as sahib. Drink brandy, sah!"—Punch.

THE MODERN BROWN BESS.—There is no truth in the report that in deference to the wishes of the opponents of the new arm just served out to our soldiers, the Government proposes changing the title of the present service rifle to "Betty-Martini."—Punch.

FOR BUTTER OR WORSE.—The very civil reply of the Bishop of Lincoln to the last letter addressed to his lordship by the clerical owner of "Apology," should have caused no surprise. Has not everyone heard of "Wordsworth's Greece"?—Punch.

"ENOUGH OF IT."

Country Squire: "By George! Tom, you've gone and shot the dog!"

Friend (from town): "Oh, I say old fellow, let's go back and have a game o' billiards, or else I'm quite sure I shall shoot the other one! They keep getting in the way so!"—Punch.

A WICKLOW farmer was passing through a churchyard at midnight, when a "sheeted ghost" rose up behind a tombstone and approached him with menacing gestures. The farmer coolly gave him a crack over the side of the head with his stick, asking him, "What he meant by being out of his grave at so late an hour?"

REMARK BY A RUSTIC.—The Times lately contained a statement that the amount issued from the Exchequer in the year ended the 31st of March last was 900,000*l.* for the purchase of bullion for coinage. Hearing this, a Hampshire agriculturist said bullion was no good for coinage. Bullion was what you may call "monkey's allowance—more kicks than halfpence."—Punch.

ENDING IN SMOKE.

Old Hodge: "Yes, as you do say, sir, I know I've a many things to be thankful for! an' if I'd one thing more, I wouldn't want nought beside!"

Parson (interested): "Indeed! and what is that?"

Old Hodge: "A shillin' fur to buy baccar, sir!"—Punch.

IN FLAGRANTE DELICTO.—Two men were the other day sentenced to two months each for having unlawfully possessed themselves of four red sabbages. At first sight the amount of punishment seems out of all proportion to the offence, but on due consideration it will be seen that they deserved double penalties, being taken doubly red-handed.—Punch.

A BAD CHILD.

Clergyman: "Baby was rather troublesome in church last Sunday, Mrs. Nollekins."

Mrs. Nollekins (much distressed): "Yes, he was indeed, sir. He don't seem to like going to church at all, and he never left off crying the whole time; and if it give us a great deal of trouble, sir, it do, for we

did hope to bring him up as a minister, like yourself.
—Judy.

THE TRUE CASTALIA!

Flippant Passenger: "No, never was ill at sea in my life! Had a friend, frightful sufferer, invariably tried everything, no use, for a long time. His upon a first-rate preventive at last!"

Nervous P. (not very well): "Indeed, sir! May I ask what your friend took?"

F. P.: "Took a vow he'd never go to sea again—and kept it."—*Fun.*

ASKING TOO MUCH.

A little boy, "well in his boots" for the first time, and very proud of them, said to his mother, after reading the customary chapter in Scott's Family Bible in the morning:

"Mother, why didn't Moses wear boots?"

"Why, my son, what makes you ask that. Perhaps he did wear boots, my dear; we don't know."

"No, he didn't, because the Bible says that the voice that came out of the burning bush to him to take off his shoes!"

There was no reply to this "climber."

MARKS AND FACES.—When lovely woman stoops to the folly of endeavouring to enhance the charms of nature by the appliances of art, her mind and manner are often affected by the circumstance, and her demeanour is as artificial as the bloom upon her cheek. When she smiles on you she does so with a semblance of constraint, as though her face was in a mask, yet she can hardly speak a word without a simper or a smirk. For fear of hurting her complexion she dare hardly blow her nose, and seems afraid to trust herself to the convulsion of a sneeze, lest the enamel of the pigments on her visage should be cracked. Beauties of this nature are certainly remarkable, viewed as clever works of art; but in the eyes of connoisseurs they never can be comparable to beauties without paint.—*Punch.*

WISH YOU MAY OBTAIN IT.

We come on this in one of the daily papers:—

A small villa, quite detached, wanted, unfurnished, within easy omnibus distance; six rooms of good size, besides offices; a good hall, staircase out of view, conservatory opening from drawing-room, two floors only, small lawn and garden around, well shrubbed, standing back in a green suburb, no street nor terrace, Kensington or the parks preferred. Rent 35*l.* to 40*l.* a year. In fresh repair. Annual tenancy, no lease nor premium. Only owners need answer. Address May, &c. Surely this is hardly enough to expect for the large rent of 35*l.* to 40*l.* a year! We should suggest a running account at the Bank, a carriage and pair, and six livery servants. If May finds any one who will let her such a house, etc., as she describes at the rent named, we think it certain he would throw in the trifles we propose.—*Fun.*

A QUID PRO QUIDO.—A member of a county bar was recently in one of our thriving manufacturing towns on business. In the hotel he was accosted by a very agreeable gentleman who finally wanted to know "Where he was from." The legal gentleman, not exactly relishing the stranger's familiarity, answered shortly, "From London." The next question was, "For what house are you travelling?" "For my own." "You are! May I ask your name?" "You may." Pause—enjoyable to the lawyer, embarrassing to the other. "Well" (desperately) "what is your name?" "Jones." "What line are you in?" "I don't understand you, sir." "What are you selling?" (impudently). "Brains" (coolly). The mercantile traveller saw his opportunity, and looking at the other from head to foot, he said, slowly, "Well, you appear to carry a deuced small lot of samples."

A FATAL MISTAKE.

A citizen of France, who has an inveterate habit of confounding everything which is said to him, and has been endeavouring to acquire a knowledge of our vernacular, was about leaving his boarding-house for a more comfortable quarter. All the little mysteries of his wardrobe, including his last nether garment and umbrella, had been carefully packed up, when he bethought to himself the unpleasant duty now devolving upon him, that of bidding "so folks" goodbye. After shaking his fellow boarders cordially by the hand, and wishing them, with incessant blowing, "so verree best success in so viri," and "soe benediction du chief," he retired in search of his "dear landlady," to give her also his blessing. He met her at the foot of the staircase, and advancing, met in hand, with a thousand scrapes, commenced his speech:

"Ah! madame, I'm goin' to leave you. You have been verree amiable to me, madame; I will never forget you for zat. If I am in my countrie I would ask zat government to give you a pension, madame."

The good lady put down her head and blushed modestly, while our Frenchman proceeded:

"Vell, I must go; you know in soez life, madame, it is full of pain an' trouble. If Got adopted so viri vich Lamartine make in his pancel, zon zared should

be no more pain. Adieu, madame, adieu! perhaps for ever."

Thereupon the Frenchman was making his exit, when he was suddenly called back by his landlady, who interestedly inquired:

"Why, Mr. C—, you have forgotten your latch key."

M. C— appeared amazed, apparently not understanding his interrogator.

"Yes," continued Mrs. M—, "you know it is the rule for all boarders to give me their keys."

"Oh, madame!" interrupted the Frenchman, with enthusiasm, "I will give you not one—not one, but *sozazands*!" and applying the action to the word, he sprang towards Mrs. M—, and embracing her tightly in his arms, kissed her most heroically.

The affrighted Mrs. M— recovering herself at length cried out:

"The key! Mr. C—, the key!"

Frenchy, looking confused—confounded, ejaculates with heavy sighs:

"Oh, Madame! I set you ax me for one kees an' I give it to you. Vat a fatale mistake!"

OUR OLD HOME.

THE winding road leads down the hill-side,

A hill cover'd over with green;

And down thro' the foliage gazing

We feast with delight on the scene.

A crystal pond bordered with willows,

Whose shadows reflected below,

Blend softly the green with the silver,

The sun setting all in a glow.

Beyond, rising over the tree tops,

Alone stands a rock-cover'd hill,

Where often I play'd in my childhood,

And watch'd the old wheel at the mill.

The mill! with its dust and its rumble,

Its gloom in the silence of night;

Where grinding all day was the miller,

Disguised in the costume of white.

All these with their friendly surroundings,

The orchard of crimson and gold,

The flowers, the woods, the green grasses,

The waving grain ripe for the fold.

Oh, dearest sight, crowning the picture—

The house once so smiling and gay,

Now seems to be mournfully weeping

For friends that are gone far away.

The playful smoke curl'd from the chimney

At dusk as I cross'd at the dam;

The low of the cows and the tinkle

Alone broke the evening calm.

Remembrance will hold the dear picture,

Tho' distance and time shade my sight;

'Mid scenes of sweet beauty around me

My home will remain ever bright.

R.L.D.

GEMS.

DID you ever seriously set to wondering who would really miss and mourn you when you had crossed over the river? Do so and you will learn how little you are. When the best of us drift out on the unseen, our places here are speedily filled, tears are displaced by smiles, the voice of lamentation turns into the voice of gladness; if we remembered as at all, it is only as memories, sad, tender or beloved, as our ways fashioned them.

MOTHER is a word to which every bosom responds. It finds its way to our hearts in our youth and retains its hold upon us in our age. If fathers are looked up to for precept, principle and example, mothers are relied on for tenderness and enduring affection. Fathers are strongholds of safety, mothers are sources of love and consolation. The word "mother" is as a soft, balmy breeze coming up from the valley, sweet, soothing and grateful, cooling the fevered brow, calming the restless spirit, and tranquillizing the agitated heart. What voice was ever like the tender, soft voice of a mother?

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

PEACH PRESERVE.—To every lb. of fruit, weighed before being stoned, allow a quarter of a pound of finely-powdered loaf sugar; let the fruit be gathered in dry weather, weigh it, and remove the stones as carefully as possible; put the peaches in a jar, sprinkle the sugar amongst them; pour brandy over them; cover the jar down closely, place it in a saucepan of boiling water over the fire, and bring the brandy to a simmering point, but do not allow it to boil. Take the fruit out carefully, put it into small jars, pour over it the brandy, and when cold exclude the air by covering the jars with tissue

paper, brushed over on both sides with the white of an egg.

HINTS FOR THE SLEEPLESS.—There are, truly, physiological means of securing sleep, which should ever be steadily tried ere forming the hypothesis that sleep is unattainable without hypnotics. These are a good long walk, which will tire the muscles; a light and easily digestible supper, chiefly of farinaceous material, with or without, but better with some malt liquor of fair body and in good, sound condition. The bed may be essayed with a better chance of success than after the ordinary evening; if sleep hangs off, some alcohol, in a concentrated form, may be taken just on getting into bed; and if the weather is cold, the alcohol may be rendered more efficient by giving it in hot water. If the person be elderly, the bed may even be warmed with advantage.

STATISTICS.

RAILWAY PASSENGER STATISTICS.—The number of passengers conveyed on railways in England and Wales in the year 1870 was 238,632,921, including 27,004,386 first-class, 66,736,823 second-class, and 194,891,712 third-class. In the year 1873 the aggregate number of passengers conveyed on 11,369 miles in England and Wales was 401,465,086, including 32,474,219 first-class, 62,866,761 second-class, and 306,124,106 third-class, showing an increase of 326 miles of railway, and in the number of passengers 5,469,833 first-class and 111,232,349 third-class; but there was a decrease of 3,970,062 in the number of second-class passengers, owing, probably, to the change initiated by the Midland Railway Company in 1872 of conveying third-class passengers by all trains, which was immediately adopted by the other railway companies. The number of second-class passengers conveyed in the year 1870 was, as stated, 66,736,823; but in the year 1871 the number increased to 73,011,105, being an increase of 6,274,282. In the same year there was an increase in the number of first-class passengers of 8,088,132, and in the number of third-class passengers of 30,557,591. The number of miles run by the passenger trains in 1873 was 71,724,610, showing an increase over 1870 of 6,362,447 train miles.

MISCELLANEOUS.

THE fashion is increasing among men of the fashionable world in Paris of wearing bracelets.

In a recent report it is stated that Italy has no less than 154 schools of art, technical schools, and trade schools.

SHALL the grasshopper be used for food? The editor of the *American Naturalist* says "yes." He has tried them, and found that when killed by boiling water, and fried in butter, they are very good.

THE Duke of Edinburgh has been pleased to appoint Dr. Arthur Farre, F.R.S., to be Physician-Accouchieur to Her Royal and Imperial Highness the Duchess of Edinburgh.

KUGELMAN, the famous political printer, is undergoing his aggregate total condemnation of 125 years' imprisonment; the authorities allow him occasionally to leave for a few hours to look after his business.

It is said the French Government are about to alter the regulations respecting the marriage of officers. At present an officer can marry if he is intended to be possessed of 400*l.* The dowry in future is to be raised to nearly 1,000*l.*

THE present value of wheat is the lowest within the memory of any living farmer. This week, at the local corn markets in Surrey, good samples of wheat were sold at the unprecedentedly low prices of 1*l.* per sack.

THE true jalep plant (*Exogonium Perge*) is now blooming freely on a south wall at Kew, where its rich purple salver-shaped flowers have a beautiful appearance. Independent of what other properties it may possess it is well worth attention as a tender or half-hardy climber.

THE OLDEST THORN TREE IN SCOTLAND BLOWS DOWN.—The late gale demolished a stately thorn tree, considered the largest, if not also the oldest, in Scotland, which for many generations has stood in close proximity to the old Griegstone Mansion House, Cupar, much admired in summer when mantled in white blossom, and in winter for its old, weather-beaten aspect.

WE are sorry to say that George Thompson, the anti-slavery orator, is much in need of pecuniary assistance. He is upwards of seventy years of age, is in feeble health, and in very straitened circumstances. It is over forty years since he commenced his anti-slavery campaign in Edinburgh. For five years he was in Parliament, from 1817 to 1822, as M.P. for the Tower Hamlets; but in 1852 he lost his election, the orator being beaten by a Mr. Butler.

CONTENTS.

Page	Page
THE GIPSY PERE; OR, A SLAVE OF CIRCUMSTANCES ... 73	MISCELLANEOUS ... 95
A LOCK OF HAIR ... 76	THE SWEET SISTERS OF INCHVARRA; OR, THE VAMPIRE OF THE GUILLAMORES, commenced in ... 583
HAPPY HUSBANDS ... 78	EXPECTATIONS, commenced in ... 593
TRAVELLING; OR, ENTOMBED ALIVE ... 77	THE GIPSY PERE; OR, A SLAVE OF CIRCUMSTANCES, commenced in ... 588
CAST ON THE WORLD WHEN THE SHIP COMES HOME ... 81	CAST ON THE WORLD WHEN THE SHIP COMES HOME, commenced in ... 591
MARLIN MARDUK ... 83	WINTER, commenced in ... 591
THE SWEET SISTERS OF INCHVARRA; OR, THE VAMPIRE OF THE GUILLAMORES ... 87	MARLIN MARDUK, commenced in ... 593
SCIENCE ... 89	TRAVELLING; OR, ENTOMBED ALIVE, commenced in ... 601
EXPECTATIONS ... 90	
WITHERED VIOLETS ... 92	
FACTS ... 94	
GENS ... 95	
HOUSEHOLD TREASURES ... 95	
STATISTICS ... 96	

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

J. B.—We cannot say.
ALPHA.—Our correspondents are accommodated gratuitously.

J. O.—The letter should contain the writer's name and address.
LEAF FOR LIFE is counselled to defer such an important step for a few years.

MARIANNE B. L.—You have omitted to designate the special advertisement to which you desire to reply.

DIANA.—The hair seems to be of the prevailing fashionable colour, which is not, we believe, a natural colour.

J. B. B. G.—Take plenty of exercise in the open air and ask a chemist for some medicine suitable to your constitution.

A CONSTANT READER (Stepney).—You should choose some other name by which your advertisement can be distinguished.

G. H. F. W.—The Shah of Persia left London on Saturday the 5th July, 1873. The handwriting is good, very good for an official hand.

F. B.—The eldest unmarried daughter in the family is, we believe, usually called "Miss" without the addition of the christian name used to designate her while her elder sister was single.

SUSIE R.—The name of the person to whom the letter is addressed should be written on the letter. Through your omission to do this we are at a loss to know to whom you allude.

MARY L.—The hair cannot be eradicated without injury to the skin, which will probably turn out to be a greater disfigurement than that of which you now complain.

H. C.—The name Harriet signifies a great lady or heroine. The lady of whose age and appearance you give particulars cannot in any way be considered an old maid.

JUSTITIA.—The executors are allowed a year at least wherein to settle claims on the testator's estate. From your note it appears that this year has not expired. We apprehend you will find everything arranged to your satisfaction when the proper time arrives.

X. Y. H.—A mixture of glycerine and elder flower water rubbed on the hands at night is said to be useful in removing any roughness they may have contracted, especially if kid gloves be afterwards put on and worn through the night.

CAROL.—An eminent man has left on record that "The proper study of mankind is man." Therefore in reply to your question "What is the best thing to study?" we may suggest to you, the study of human nature in connection with the history of your own country.

ANCIENT LECTURER.—You must reside in London two or three weeks before your marriage, that is if you intend to be married in London. Directly you arrive you should make application to the parish clerk of the church at which you propose to be married; he will put you in the way. You will find no difficulty.

CHARLES H.—If the mother of an illegitimate child has obtained an affiliation order against the supposed father of the child, and permits the payments thereby ordered to be made to be in arrear for more than thirteen successive weeks without applying to a justice, she cannot recover the payments for more than thirteen weeks. But the father must still make the weekly payment. The handwriting is remarkably good.

ROSIE.—Such a young lady as you describe must be, we think, very good looking. In advising which of two suitors a young lady should choose, one being good tempered but not in a good position, the other bad tempered and well off, we are inclined to say take neither or take the good tempered one. A good temper is almost everything in married life. The reason why it is not quite everything is that it cannot of itself earn bread and cheese.

B. (Perth).—Somebody has said "It takes a great quantity of grief to kill." We trust that the measure of your grief does not even approximate to this quantity. You will think us one of Job's comforters when we add that your despair seems to be unreasonable, on the principle that there are as good fish in the sea "as any that have been caught." At all events we trust that when you read this you will find yourself in the possession of excellent health, and if your spirits are not equally bright you are able to appreciate the philosophy which teaches that what cannot be cured should be endured.

CLARA.—Certainly not. There is no royal road to excellence in any pursuit, and this may be predicted of music above all. If you have any latent musical talent steady perseverance must ensure success. But it will be well to ascertain that all-inherent talent. Few things are more miserable than eternally thumping on a piano, or thrumming a guitar when no spark of love for the divine art exists. Far better take to fancy needlework or keep

an aquarium and study its inmates, anything rather than the pursuit of such a phantom. And you must remember that musical taste and talent are developed early—Mozart could play at seven years of age.

E. N. O.—The word "dowager" is derived from the French "douairière" which in its turn has its origin from "douaire," dowry, the latter word again coming from the present tense of the Latin verb "to give." The derivation thus plainly expresses the signification, viz:—that a dowager is one who receives dowry, her share of her deceased husband's property. The word is usually only applied to the relic of persons of rank and title. A dowager peeress retains her title, unless she should marry a commoner, when her peerage lapses.

JULIA.—You can easily acquire a very tolerable acquaintance with the science of heraldry by a little patience and observation. We say "science" advisably, because such title is claimed by the heraldic adepts, probably in the same manner that trouveres or jongleurs denominated the making and singing of romantic lays "the ray science." Heraldry does not take at the present day the position which our ancestors allotted to it, but has fallen from its high estate. Even so recently as one hundred years ago nearly every man with any pretension to the name of gentleman was sufficiently well acquainted with its mysteries to recognize most coats-of-arms he might meet. Your best plan of cultivating a practical acquaintance with blazonry will be to purchase an elementary work upon the subject, of which there are many. Then make yourself master of the way in which the tinctures are denoted by the engraver—as vertical lines for gules, or red; horizontal lines for azure, or blue; a plain white surface for argent, or silver, etc. Learn also the names of the several ordinaries, etc. Then purchase at a bookstall an old "Peerage"—the age is immaterial and the cost is trifling. This you can consult and illuminate according to the engraving, and by this easy and pleasant means you will soon acquire sufficient heraldic knowledge to identify the owners of the various armorial bearings you may see.

WINTER.

Cold winter; how cheerless thou art,

How false and full of pain,
Bringing death to many a heart,
And many a sad refrain.

As oft we list thy fearless wind,
And feel thy keener blast,
As oft we see poor humankind,
Miserably cast down at last.

But, winter! thou art growing gentler,
Tell me the reason, I pray?
With a last expiring breath
He whispers, "spring come to-day." X.

DELIA.—The carte de visite you have sent presents to the view an image of great brightness and beauty. Amiability, refinement and love are all there. Gentleness combines with energy, goodness with intelligence, and over all is thrown a sweetness of expression which seems as if it would remain under all circumstances and "until life at last is over." The face may not be classically perfect, but from it there seems to proceed such a sympathy with all that is lovely as would make many tremble somewhat while in mute admiration they gazed at the exquisite delicacy in which so much of beauty has been enshrined and which, to borrow an expression from a writer of the present day, is after all "so very human." It seems to be a face which by the beauty of its presence would reprove anything which in any way was false, or anything which ought not to exist in the person upon whom it looked, a face which, without smacking of it, would commend the silent homage of all a face which could cheer the suffering and the feeble as well as animate the strong. Where the weak points of such a physiognomy may be we cannot tell. A little too affectionate perhaps, but that would depend on the character and position of her partner for life. A flower of such surpassing elegance should be carefully tended and devotedly loved, and he upon whom such duty has been or may be cast will doubtless reap in its performance a rich and priceless reward. Your handwriting is remarkably good. Thus, you see, as Delia means "bright" you answer to your name. That is the notion an inspection of the portrait conveys—brightness without gaiety, a brightness that will not grow dim.

FAIR ANNE OF CLY.—If you are really anxious about the moles on your face you should consult a surgeon about their removal. As it is his province to decide on the advisability of such an operation, so we suppose it is ours to talk to you about them in answer to your question. "Do we think them unlucky things?" You say you have two or three on your face. And thus you fairly puzzle us; because our oracle is silent when an inexact question is put to it. The fact is that the said oracle is so precious ambiguous itself that it never tolerates the slightest approach to want of precision in any one. If you had said you have two moles, they perhaps might have been considered as two too many, while if you had told us you have three moles we might have congratulated you on the fact, have pronounced them "lucky," and have cited in support of our pronouncement that well known authority "There's luck in odd numbers, says Rory O' More." True it is that Rory's preaching and practice did not agree for on his principles he should have let the girl alone after he gave her the kiss which followed the "eight times before." He did not, however, but gave her another, making two, and thus left veiled in uncertainty the question whether odd or even numbers are lucky as applied to kisses or moles on the face, and whether—to become rather serious on such an important occasion as the present—a man should be judged by his actions or his words when they are contradictory to each other. As to the date of Mid-Lent Sunday in the year 1835, we have made the calculation for you, finding the golden number and all that sort of thing, and are able to say that the date of the third Sunday in Lent in the year 1835 was the twenty-second day of March.

VIOLET W., nineteen, short and affectionate. Respondent should be dark and rood looking.

LOTTIE, twenty, tall, dark eyes, handsome, accom-

plished and loving, wishes to marry; an officer in the army preferred.

MARY, twenty-two, medium height, dark hair and eyes, considered nice looking, would like to correspond with a tradesman, with a view to matrimony.

CELIA M., eighteen, blue eyes, a pretty face and loving disposition. Respondent should be about twenty-three, tall, fair and stout.

KATE, twenty-five, medium height, fond of music and home, would like to correspond with a military gentleman about same age.

LAURA, twenty, dark eyes, dark hair, a pretty face, rather tall, would make a loving wife to a good husband. Respondent should be dark, tall and good looking.

LILIAN, nineteen, auburn hair, gray eyes, tall and slender. Respondent should be about twenty-four, dark, stout, tall, good tempered and loving.

FAITH, twenty-two, wishes to correspond with a young gentleman from twenty-five to thirty, with a view to matrimony; a member of the I.O.G.F. preferred. A widower not objected to.

LAURENCE JAMES, nineteen, wishes to marry a young gentleman, about twenty-one, with good prospects; she is considered good looking and thoroughly domesticated.

ZILPH, twenty-one, tall, fair, blue eyes and golden hair, extremely handsome and accomplished, would like to correspond with a gentleman, with a view to matrimony.

SWEET LILIA, eighteen, medium height, brown hair and eyes, fond of home and music and domesticated. Respondent must be about thirty, good tempered and able to keep her comfortably.

JENNIE, seventeen, medium height, fair, fond of home, wishes to correspond with a young man about twenty-six, tall, fair, fond of home, who is able to keep her comfortably.

JACK OUTSIDE THE LIFT, 5th. 4th. in the navy, rather stout, light-brown hair and considered good looking, wishes to correspond with a young lady of about the same height, of fair complexion and thoroughly domesticated; a London girl preferred.

CARIE, eighteen, medium height, dark-brown hair, blue eyes, happy disposition, would like to correspond with a young man rather dark, about twenty-one, with a view to matrimony. She would make a loving wife to a good husband.

DAISY, twenty-four, fair complexion, has a loving heart to offer, fond of home, and parents in good circumstances, thinks she would make a dutiful wife, would like to correspond with a respectable man, with a view to matrimony.

FELICE ROYAL YARDWAY, twenty-one, 5th. 7th. in, light-brown hair and considered good looking, wishes to correspond with a young lady of about the same height, dark hair and complexion and thoroughly domesticated; a London girl preferred.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:

ALICE R. is responded to by—"Andrew," a tradesman, who thinks he would suit her.

JAMES N. C. W. by—"Highland Jessie," seventeen, tall, fair, good looking, domesticated and an excellent singer.

ANNE by—"A. G.," twenty-three, 5th. 8th. dark complexion, and considered handsome, also very respectably connected.

LOVING SAM by—"Sophy B." loving, domesticated and very pretty; and by—"Lonely Nelly," twenty-three, good looking, fair complexion, parents in good circumstances, affectionate to and fond of home.

CHARLIE R. by—"Sweet Briar," fair, with blue eyes, and considered good looking; and by—"Annie," twenty, medium height, blue eyes, light hair, fond of home and children, would make a loving wife to a good husband.

VARA by—"Fenton B.," thirty-one, medium height, dark eyes and hair, full black beard; and by—"Sailor Jack," 5th. 7th. dark complexion, bushy whiskers, can dance, sing, and would make a good husband, no income, but good prospects of always having plenty of work.

DANCING JACK by—"Lily B.," dark, very pretty, and thinks she answers to his description of a loving wife; and by—"Lisette," twenty-one, medium height, light-brown, curly hair, gray eyes, respectably connected and a lover of the sea.

EDWIN by—"Miss J.," twenty, loving, domesticated, well educated and in a good position; and by—"Lillian," twenty-three, good looking, medium height, particularly fond of home and music, thoroughly domesticated, respectably connected, would make a kind and loving wife to a good husband.

* Letters from the following have also been received.—M. A. C. M.; M. L.; G. W.; R. M.; Arthur G.; J. H. H.; J. M. F.; and from G. A. G. who has sent some verses on the choice of a wife.

ALL THE BACK NUMBERS, PARTS AND VOLUMES of the "LONDON READER" are in print and may be had at the Office, 33, Strand; or will be sent to any part of the United Kingdom Post-free for Three-halfpence, Eightpence, and Five Shillings and Eightpence each.

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